Thursday, February 17, 2011 | 4 sections | Vol. 26 | No. 71 | P18 | www.inquirer.net

PACMAN GOES TO WASHINGTON The boy from Sarangani has literally come a long way. He has a whirlwind tour of the Capitol in Washington DC with no less than US Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (left) as his guide on Tuesday before proceeding to the White House for a meeting with President Barack Obama. "This is an unforgettable moment in my life," he says. (See story below)

P-Noy seeks China mercy

WHAT'S INSIDE

WORLD / A21
Bahrain new center of Arab anger

BUSINESS / B1
Peso seen rising to 37.50 to $1

METRO / A19
Unpaid fare leads to massacre suspect's arrest

WORLD / A21
Computer crashes humans in 'Jeopardy!'

ENTERTAINMENT / E1
Katrina Halili: The fight ain't over

Resign calls rising but Merci not giving up

AS CALLS for her to resign mount and with Ivy Gutierrez-Arco said the Church calling on Congress to get on the proceedings to impeach her, Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez is not giving up and will appeal the Supreme Court ruling allowing the impeachment case against her.

Thus, Assistant Ombudsman Jose de Jesus said the House of Representatives' committee on justice should desist from wasting the impeachment hearings while the case was on appeal.

He said Gutierrez believed she could still win her case, and

BOMBAS to 4

COMMANDER IN CHIEF President Aquino fields questions from reporters during a press briefing at the grandstand in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City. Mr. Aquino earlier presided over a command conference with military and defense officials where they discussed, among other things, how to uproot corruption in the military.

Romulo may get new post after DFA

By Norman Bordadora and Dona Z. Pazzibugan

FOREIGN SECRETARY Alberto Romulo, the hapless smoking holdover official from the Arroyo administration and a close friend of the Aquino family, is on the way out, President Aquino indicated on Wednesday.

Romulo may be leaving the Department of Foreign Affairs

ROMULO to 4

Poor mother's dream of better life for 2 kids may end in China Feb. 21

By Artje dela Cruz
Correspondent at large

JUST LIKE any mother, she dreams of better times for her children—away from the poverty she has known all her life.

That's what Jolly Ordinario-Villanueva, 32, had in mind when she left her home in Ilocos, Isabela, and boarded a flight from Manila to Xiamen, China, on Christmas Eve in 2008.

There wasn't even any soothsayer to foam on at home that night, recalled her brother Jessie Ordinario.

Their son only hope the family fortune would soon unravel when Villanueva takes on her promised job in China that would allow her earnings of at least P100,000 a month.

She didn't know the risks involved, Ordinario said, or that she would be acting as a "drug mule," a courier for a West African drug syndicate.

Ordinario only knows the risks as well.

The family is hoping that Ordinario could earn his sister Dodi surrender by agreeing to testify against the drug syndicate composed mostly of Africans.

Shalmie Maj. Ferdinand Marcellino, who recently completed an assignment at the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency (PDEA), said Ordinario had helped the agency reach

POOR A10

Beijing: Death for 3 Pinoys is final

By Christina G. Ayendoño and Jerry E. Esplanada

AS TIME TICKS, President Aquino is calling Chinese President Hu Jintao in a last-ditch effort to save three Filipino "drug mules" from execution in China and possibly commute their death sentences.

"Just as of now, they have not yet signified willingness or accept the phone calls," the President said.

"It is time for them to demonstrate that pronounced commitment of improved or closer bilateral ties. This will be a test," Mr. Aquino told reporters.

Relations between the two countries soured last year following the botched hostage rescue in Manila that left eight Hong Kong Chinese dead.

At press time last night, the President was conferring at the Palace with Vice President Jejomar Binay on the case.

"I might mind [Binay] as emissary to stress how important it is for us to have the death penalty be commuted to life im-

P-NOY to 4

WHITE HOUSE MEETING

Pacquiao meets the man: 'He's so tall'

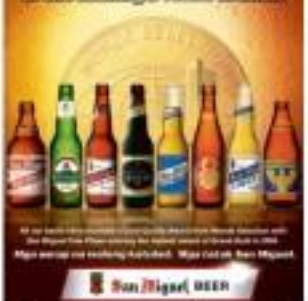
WASHINGTON—Unlike on the White House stopped on Tuesday during Manny Pacquiao's whirlwind tour of the US capital that included meetings with President Barack Obama and Sen. Harry Reid.

The Filipino boxing sensation was crossing the street near the White House when several drivers, who were trying to snap photos of Pacquiao with cell phones, crossed a makeshift pilings. Pacquiao (nicknamed Viral Strumberg said. Nobody was hurt in the accident.

Pacquiao and his wife Jinkee spent time talking boxing and basketball with President Obama, along with a few of business.

Pacquiao was elected representative in the Philippine Congress from Sarangani province nine months ago and has taken the new job as seriously as he does boxing. He already has replaced budding

PACQUIAO to 4



'Very unusual case': SC reverses ruling for 4th time

By Marlon Ramos

OH, NO, not again.

In a startling move, the Supreme Court has flip-flopped yet again on the issue of the city-hood of 16 municipalities, this time upholding the constitutionality of the laws that separately created the new cities.

Even Midas Marquez, the high court's spokesperson and administrator, appeared surprised when he heard reporters yesterday to explain the justices' change of stance.

"This is really a very unusual case considering that this is the fourth decision of the court ... This is also the third reversal [of the original ruling]," Marquez

VERY UNUSUAL A-4

WEATHER FORECAST

Second FRONTPAGE

2 P 3D
2 2 4
2 1 2 3

SUPERLOTTO 6/49
9 7 0
0 2 7
1 6 8

4D
7 1 3 4

MEGALOTTO 6/45
2 3 6 15 23 29
P4,500,000.00

GRAND LOTTO 6/55
5 7 10 12 18 20
P107,752,689.20

COA chief: Let's wait for SC

Bad local governance blamed for insurgency

LUCENA CITY—Armed Forces Chief Gen. Ricardo David Jr. said the inefficiency of local governments was one of the main causes of the communist insurgency.

Had local government officials been good about delivering social services, there would have been no insurgency, he said.

"The insurgency persists in all about good governance, David said in an interview at the 29th founding anniversary of the military's Southern Luzon Command Division(s) in Camp Nakar on Tuesday.

David said the commander Hero Pea pile's Army 203rd, with an estimated 4,500 armed regular underground, continues to remain strong in the Caraga and Davao regions in Mindanao, Samar and in some parts of the Bicol region.

He cited Bohol as a model of government's success in anti-insurgency because of the successful anti-poverty program of the provincial government.

Citing military reports, David said the influence of communist guerrillas in Quezon province, once a key center of communist rebel strength, particularly in the Bondoc Peninsula area, has drastically decreased.

He said most of the NPA rebels operating in Quezon were recruits gone from the Bicol provinces.

Quezon Gov. David Suarez said the provincial government's thrust is health, agriculture and education.

He said his government is allowing the use of a 27-hectare farm land in Calauag town as settlement for the grazing number of rebel returnees.

Lt. Gen. Roland Tetabali, the former commander, said the command is now prioritizing peace and development projects over combat operations in the villages infested by NPA rebels. —Delfin T. Mallari Jr.

Villar says he'll leave if Noynoy appoints his replacement

By Leila B. Salaverria and TJ Burgonio

COMMISSION on Audit Chair Reynaldo Villar yesterday said he would not insist on staying on in his post if President Aquino decides to appoint a new head of the agency.

But Villar also said that he is ready to hold a dialogue with Malacañang as the Presidential Spokesperson Edwin Lacierda has suggested.

In the meantime, everyone should just wait for the Supreme Court to resolve a pending petition questioning his semi-office, he said.

Malacañang has said that Villar's term of office ended on Feb. 2, 2011, his seventh year in the agency.

But Villar's position is that when he was appointed COA chair in 2008, he got a fresh, seven-year term since a COA chair is supposed to serve for seven years.

When he was named chair, Villar had already been a COA commissioner for four years. A new commissioner was appointed to serve the rest of his unexpired term.

The COA chair said he had no intention of defying Malacañang.

"If they want to appoint a new chair, and if that happens, I would have to leave and I would just wait for the Supreme Court decision," he said in a phone interview.

But he also noted that Malacañang had said that it wanted to settle the issue amicably, and said he was amenable to holding a dialogue.

"If there is a dialogue...I will make a suggestion that it would be more prudent on the part of everyone to wait for the resolution of the Supreme Court case," he said.

'Untenable'

Lawyer Dennis Funa went to the high court to question Villar's appointment as chair on the ground that this was a violation of the constitutional ban of a commissioner, which is prohibited by the Constitution.

Funa said that Villar's commission had ended on 2003 was untenable.

But, according to Villar, former Justice Secretary Agnes Devanadera and former Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita are both in agreement with his position that his term would end in 2015.

He said Ermita had issued a directive saying so, and until this was set aside, it was considered valid.

Villar also said yesterday that he would not, as yet, leave the COA because if he does, there would be only one commissioner left at the helm of the agency. So replacement has been named for the other commissioners who resigned earlier this month.

With only one commissioner heading the COA, the audit agency would be unable to make decisions, since it is supposed to be a collegial body, he explained.

"There should be at least two (at the helm). I cannot leave just like that because that would be absolutedecision," he said.

Sen. Franklin Drilon yesterday said there was no legal basis for Villar to stay on at his post beyond Feb. 2.

A good chairman

"Villar has done his share in the COA. He was a good chairman, and he should not tarnish his term with the perception that he's clinging to his post when there is absolutely no legal basis," Drilon said.

"He can't stay a day longer than Feb. 2. That is established," he said.

He said Villar's appointment and confirmation complied with Supreme Court rulings which provide that the aggregate term of constitutional offices cannot exceed seven years.

Villar's tenure never beyond his seven years of office even if he had served as chairman for less than three years and he cannot be reappointed to the agency because of the constitutional prohibition," Drilon said.

Drilon said that former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo originally appointed Villar as COA commissioner on Feb. 2, 2004, and appointed him chair in April 2008 to replace Guillermo Carague whose term had expired. His appointment was until Feb. 2, 2011, he said.

SolGen presses role in Garcia plea bargain

By Leila B. Salaverria

THE OFFICE of the Solicitor General (OSG) yesterday insisted on its authority to intervene in the plea bargain concerning the plunder case against former military comptroller Carlos Garcia, claiming that enough evidence had been presented to convict Garcia.

In reply to the state prosecutors' opposition to its intervening in the case, the OSG also said that the plea bargain should be rejected because it had no legal basis.

The Office of the Special Prosecutor earlier said the OSG had no reason to intervene in the Garcia plunder case. The state prosecutors also said that the case against Garcia was weak, hence their decision to enter into a plea bargain.

According to the OSG, an examination of the case records would show that the "State is sufficient evidence that was presented by the prosecution to convict Garcia of the crime of plunder."

It contended that the testimony of former auditor Heidi Mendoza had not been categorically established by Armed Forces personnel as argued by prosecutors.

Mendoza had testified on questionable transactions involving Garcia, including the disposition of P200 million, of which P64 million had been unaccounted for.

The OSG said that the prosecution accepted "hook, line and sinker" the testimony of Neri Cadev, the head of the AFP's bookkeeping division, that the P200 million was intact, and "no detailed statement was made on how the same P200 million is still intact."

It also said that other AFP witnesses presented were not in a position to testify on the specifics of the P200 million and its disbursement to different accounts.

The OSG also said that the statements of Garcia's wife, Clarita, about military suppliers giving gifts to her husband had been accepted by the Sandiganbayan itself.

It said the antigraft court's ruling on the admissibility and weight of the two statements of Clarita was "undeniably favorable and beneficial" to the people's case.

Hence, the OSG said it was baffled why state prosecutors would take a position contrary to the ruling of the Sandiganbayan.

It further said the plea bargain was a compromise intended to benefit Garcia because under the agreement, the accused was relinquishing his ownership of several assets in exchange for being allowed to plead guilty to a lesser offense and the eventual dismissal of other cases against him and his family, who are his co-accused.

It also noted that the prosecution had submitted to showing that Garcia had withdrawn P128 million from his bank accounts, but the return of the amount to the government was not included in the plea bargain.

Poll exec denies sabotage rap but is still in hiding

ROMBLON, CITY—A former provincial election officer charged in court with election sabotage during the 2007 senatorial polls has denied the allegations but remains in hiding.

Lawyer Lilian Imao Badana, former chair of South Graduates Board of canvassers, was out in her house in Odiongan City in North Tablas when authorities went there, South Graduate Gov. Arthur Dingguy told the Inquirer by phone.

In a text message to the Inquirer, Badana said the charges "came as a big surprise to me. It is stupid to think that I will do such a thing."

The Commission on Elections (Comelec) filed 11 cases of electoral sabotage against Badana in the Deasy Regional Trial Court on Tuesday for allegedly tampering with election results through padding of votes of several senatorial candidates in the 2007 polls.

It was the first case of electoral sabotage ever filed by the poll body against a former Comelec official. The crime, introduced in Republic Act No. 9369 in 2007, is nonbailable and punishable by life imprisonment.

Dingguy said he had no information as to Badana's whereabouts. "We checked if she's in their residence but it turned out negative," he said.

The Comelec said Badana had submitted falsified copies of the provincial certificate of canvass of votes from General Santos City, Polomolok, Tampakan, Tupi, Banga, Koronadal, Lake Sebu, Sto. Niño, Surallah, Tantangan and T'boli.

The documents copy-neatly padded votes ranging from 14,000 to 119,000 in favor of candidates belonging to the administration's Team Unity during the 2007 polling.

Chief Insp. Alexis Yap, regional police spokesperson, urged Badana to surrender. "If she will not do it, she will be the subject of a manhunt," he said.

Badana and the same cases filed against her on Tuesday were dismissed in August 2007. Cortés Aguman, Edwin G. Fernandez and Jeoffrey Medrez, Inquirer Mindanao

NO FINALITY OF CONVICTION

Ecleo can't be arrested, says lawyer

By Franklin R. Caliguid
Inquirer Mindanao

BUTUAN CITY—Dinagat Rep. Ruben Ecleo Jr. cannot be arrested yet because the Supreme Court has yet to rule with finality on Ecleo's petition seeking to nullify the arrest order issued by the Sandiganbayan, his lawyer claimed yesterday.

"Until after the Supreme Court decides with finality on the issue, arresting Ecleo would be premature and violative of his due process rights," lawyer Jose Severus Aquino said.

"His conviction before the Sandiganbayan is not final, pending our third motion for reconsideration, and with that Rep. Ecleo's temporary liberty stays," he said.

In October 2006, the Sandiganbayan convicted Ecleo on 18 to 21 years to prison after he was found guilty of graft for his role in a million-peso anomalous flood disbursement he variously labeled as "flood control projects while serving as town mayor of San Jose, Antique (del Norte, now) in 1998.

On Feb. 4, the Supreme Court denied Ecleo's appeal and upheld his conviction.

Last Tuesday the high court declined to rule on another urgent motion from Ecleo for a temporary restraining order to stop his arrest.

Dinagat Vice Gov. Jude Ecleo, the congressman's sister, has warned that efforts to arrest her brother could lead to violence.

"The government has no right to arrest and without a valid and legal arrest order. There must be a final order, otherwise there will be chaos because his followers might resist [against the] injustice and denial of due process," the vice governor said.

But she said her brother had told that he was ready to face the music and would voluntary give himself up if the high court rules against him.

"I don't think Ruben will hide. He knows nobody is above the law and that it would be unfair to the PBMA," she said.

Ecleo Jr. is the "supreme master" of the Philippine Benevolent Missionaries Association (PBMA) religious cult based in San Jose, Dinagat Islands.

In 2005, thirteen broke out of the PBMA members held out at the Ecleo's compound after a standoff with police against policemen who came to serve a warrant of arrest against Ecleo Jr. for the murder of his wife. The remaining 200 cultists left more than 20 PBMA members dead.

A similar bloody resistance occurring in Surigao del Norte province sent a striking fear that Ecleo Jr. has "learned his lesson" and has been getting good advice.

"Unlike before when he was surrounded by strong advisers, now I'm sure he will surrender no matter how painful it is for us," she said.

STRADCOM®
IT Solutions for Real Change

SO THAT THE PUBLIC MAY KNOW

1. The following persons have been FRAUDULENTLY AND MALICIOUSLY MISREPRESENTING themselves to be owners/shareholders of Stradcom:
Ms. Bambina C. Sumbilla
Mr. Alberto Z. Yujuico
Mr. Jet Salmain
Mr. Rodolfo Millare

Stradcom Corporation warns the public that these personalities are NOT nor have they ever been incorporators/ shareholders/ co-owners or in any way entitled to or authorized to act for or on behalf of Stradcom Corp. Any representation by these personalities using the name of Stradcom Corporation is not only FALSE but also ILLEGAL.

2. There is only ONE Stradcom Corporation and there is NO intra-corporate case/controversy among the shareholders of Stradcom.

The public must also be warned that Sumbilla, et al are MISLEADING the public by claiming that there is an intra-corporate controversy in Stradcom using a Supreme Court case that discussed an intra-corporate controversy of STRADEC. STRADCOM is a corporation entirely separate and distinct from STRADEC and does not in any way have an intra-corporate controversy.

Stradcom is a duly incorporated private corporation owned by the following shareholders:
Stradcom International Holdings, Inc.
Penta Capital Corporation
First Metro Investment Corporation
Republic Glass Holdings, Inc.
Philippine Veterans Bank

The Chairman of Stradcom is former Finance Secretary Roberto de Ocampo and its president is Mr. Cezar Quiambao. The external auditors of Stradcom are SGV and Co. and the Board of Directors and shareholders of Stradcom certify that there is no conflict with respect to ownership of shares among the directors and/or shareholders of Stradcom.

3. Stradec is NOT Stradcom
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STRADCOM is an information technology company,
specifically created to computerize the registration services of the ITS.

Stradec is NOT a shareholder of Stradcom.
The Stock and Transfer Book of Stradcom will show that Stradec is in fact NOT A SHAREHOLDER AT ALL in Stradcom Corp. Therefore Sumbilla, et al CANNOT claim any ownership whatsoever in Stradcom.

Sumbilla et al cannot even claim to be owners of Stradec, much less Stradcom. Sumbilla, et al cannot even claim to be owners of Stradcom via Stradec as they are DELINQUENT shareholders of Stradec Corp and have no rights to vote or be voted for in STRADEC.

Sumbilla, et al are not even authorized to represent Stradec.
The public must further be warned that the allegations of Sumbilla, et al that a 2007 Supreme Court decision declared them owners of Stradec is MISLEADING and WRONG.
In fact, a more recent March 2010 Supreme Court decision (GR 180884) upheld a 2009 RTC case, stating that: "... it is clear that Quiambao and his group remain as members of the duly constituted board of directors of STRADEC, as evidenced by the STRADEC corporate and stockholders' meetings held in the years 2005, 2006, and 2007. On the other hand, Yujuico and his group, ... no longer possess any valid authority to represent STRADEC in its corporate transactions and dealings. ..."

We hope that this finally puts to rest any questions as to the legitimate ownership and control of Stradcom Corporation.

Signed:

ROBERTO F. DE OCAMPO
CHAIRMAN

CEZAR P. QUIAMBAO
PRESIDENT/CEO

ATTY. ERIC GENE E. PILAPIL
CORPORATE SECRETARY

'Loony' lawyer in Ampatuan trial cries foul

By Philip C. Tubeza

TWO OF the defense lawyers in the Maguindanao massacre trial yesterday complained about media coverage of the hearings, with one of them saying that he had been labelled a loony on Twitter in a rush.

Lawyer Manuel Sendon denied reports that he had ever made the suggestion that the victims had killed themselves so that he could offer the victims' relatives to have the courtroom if they could not stand the way he was cross-examining a state witness.

Lawyer Petu Beal, meanwhile, complained about the "style" of a Feb. 16 Inquirer story ("They are mere lines," Ampatuan lawyer says) that tagged him as an Ampatuan lawyer.

He said he was supposedly for "civilians" in the case who "were victimized as well as minority" but could not say if they were related to the Ampatuan family, several of whose members are undergoing trial for the November 2009 massacre.

'Misquoted'

He said many people have been calling him about the story which he said had "misquoted" what was happening in the hearings. As a result, he said he had been called "loony" on Twitter.

"With all due respect to the media, you only have to report what's factual, what has happened, and not add aside remarks," Beal said.

The matter of issues have come up during Beal's cross-examination of National Bureau of Investigation (NBI) forensics chief Reynaldo Romero last Feb. 9.

He had asked Romero if he knew the kind of insects that were attracted to decomposing cadavers. When the NBI officer answered in the affirmative, Beal said Romero could not have known if some of the victims' wounds were caused by those insects as he was not an expert in "forensic entomology."

This led private prosecutor Nena Santos to comment: "Is he suggesting that the insects killed the victims?"

Beal had also suggested that some of the bodies in the Ampatuan mass grave site could have been those of some of the assailants.

Profuse apologies

As yesterday's hearing, Beal said he was sorry if the stress found his line of questioning hurtful and offered his "profuse apologies."

"That was not intended. My line of questioning was meant to elicit some facts," he said.

Manuel said he was not referring to the victims' relatives when he suggested that they leave if they could not bear his line of questioning. He said he was referring to "people at the back of the room rooting" who "were making noise."

Manuel also denied reports quoting him as suggesting that the victims might have killed themselves. He said what he asked was if the victims might have hurt themselves to explain the commotion found on their bodies.

With Cherie Mervin

Coroner tells how 6 journalists died

By Philip C. Tubeza

WHILE DEFENSE lawyers tried to defend their militia in court, police medico-legal officer Fedna Bonita Jr. yesterday exercised his testimony by describing the barbaric killing of six of the victim journalists who were all shot in the head.

Bonita said journalist Joe Dalray of Gold Star Daily in Koronadal City was shot seven times, including once in his left jaw that left a gaping wound at the back of his head.

"[The bullet] possibly came from a high powered firearm because of the extensive damage to his skull and the successive laceration along the bullet's path," Bonita said.

"[A portion of] the skull was blown off. The back of his head was missing," said Bonita as Dalray's widow tried to hold back her tears in the gallery.

Dalray's colleague at Gold Star, Bonie Perante, bore five gunshot wounds—all in the head—with one of them being aimed at his head that left a hole 6 centimeters by 5 centimeters big at the back of his skull, Bonita said.

"This led to the immediate cessation of brain function," he added.

Bonita said that another Gold Star journalist, Rubello Bataluna, had four fatal gunshot wounds, including one that left "a portion of his head missing," Bonita said.

"The was a concentrated fracture on a portion of the skull was reduced to gruesome," he added.

Bonita is expected to continue his testimony on his autopsy of these more victims today.

2 senators defend deportation of Taiwanese to China

By Christian V. Esguerra

TWO SENIOR members of the Senate yesterday threw their support behind the Philippine government's decision to deport 14 Taiwanese suspected criminals to China, a move that has strained relations between Manila and Taipei.

Senator Pimentel Juan Miguel Zubiri described the move as "a correct position" while Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, an expert in international law, said there was nothing irregular about it.

Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., meanwhile, filed a resolution pushing an inquiry into the condition of Filipinos in Taiwan, who were reportedly leaving the brunt of Taipei's displeasure over the deportation.

Zubiri acknowledged the backlash given "the fact that Taiwan is a very advanced economy and many of our countrymen are working there."

"But the reality of life is we have a 'One-China' policy," he told reporters, referring to the diplomatic recognition of China's claim that Taiwan is but a part of its territory.

Part of a community of nations that is governed by certain norms like what they call international law."

He said recognition of the One-China policy was "without prejudice to our economic relationship with Taiwan. "We value Taiwan as a friend, but not as a pahinante (city)" he said.

Santiago said the deportation was "valid and legal" considering that China had made a formal request and presented documents and documentary showing that the 14 suspects were its citizens.

The 14 suspects were facing criminal charges in connection with an alleged cloned card fraud in China.

"It appears that these foreign nationals were nationals of the requesting party," Santiago said. "The deportation is correct under international law."

Beijing-Taipei issue

Also yesterday, Justice Secretary Lilia de Lima maintained that the diplomatic row with Taiwan over the 14 deported Taiwanese was an issue between Beijing and Taipei and did not involve the Philippines.

She reiterated that the Philippines would not apologize over the incident.

"Taiwan and Beijing are supposed to have this 2009 cross-strait agreement on crime fighting and mutual judicial assistance where they can really settle matters like this," De Lima said in an interview with local reporters.

"The Philippines is not a party to that. It is now up to Taiwan and Beijing to settle that matter (between) themselves," she said.

With Jerome Aning, Chris Martin and AFP

Corrections

IN THE FEB. 13 ISSUE, a photo caption on Page 31 of the Sunday Lifestyle section misspelled the surname of the father of Karen Batungbacal, Jerry de Venecia III's wife. Karen's father is Dr. Ramon Batungbacal.—not Batungbakal.

* * *

IN THE FEB. 16 ISSUE, a front-page story—"Typecast, what's that? 25 years of Inquirer exhibit"—announced the return of the film documentarist with the exhibit "Philippine Daily Inquirer" displayed at the Inquirer exhibit at SM North Edsa Annex in Quezon City. The text belonged to Quig Montagnolnak, a news office assistant in the Inquirer's Classified Ads section—not to the Inquirer's former chief photographer, the late Jimmy Villena.

* * *

IN THE MAR. 2010, the Philippine Stock Exchange table on Page B2 of the Business section carried incorrect figures under the Open, High and Volume columns for Lepanto Consolidated Mining Company "B." According to a correction issued by the Philippine Stock Exchange in its Daily Quotations Report on Feb. 16, the figures for the Open and High columns should be 0.021—not 0.46. The figure for the Volume (In shares) column should be 1,250,000—not 2,250,000. The entire table carried incorrect figures under the Volume and Value columns for the Mining and Oil sectors. The figure for the Volume (In shares) column should be 350,209,136—not 352,209,136, while the figure for the Value (In pesos) column should be 126,811,753.99—not 127,758,753.00.

Assistant Editor Tony Bergonia

Across the NATION

Purge voters' list before polls in ARMM, watchdog tells gov't

COTABATO CITY—Unless a massive purge of its voters' list is carried out, elections in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM)—whether held in August or any other time—will never be clean, a Catholic Church-based poll watchdog said on Wednesday.

Fr. Jerold Precilla, chair of the regional Parish Pastoral Council for Responsible Voting (PPCRV), said the Commission on Elections (Comelec) must clean up the region's list of voters as part of "clean" reforms before Aug. 1 an election can be expected.

In past elections, the PPCRV and other poll watchdogs had documented different types of fraud that politicians employed to ensure their victory. These included tapping minor to cast ballots, hiring "flying" voters and falsifying election returns.

The watchdogs, as well as critics of previous administrations, have branded the ARMM as the country's cheating capital during elections.

In 2008, it became the center of a Senate investigation of former Comelec commissioner Virgilio Garcillano, who was said to have orchestrated the defeat of actor Fernando Poe Jr. when he ran for the presidency against the incumbent, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo.

Even with the planned automated elections, Precilla said there could never be honest polls in the ARMM unless the PPCRV's suggestions are adopted.

One of these is for the Comelec to see Inamirizon in the registration of voters in the region to ensure that problems of "flying" and "proxy" voters are avoided.

"What must be addressed are pre-election activities, such as the registration of voters, campaign activities and distribution of election documents," Precilla said.

The National Movement for Free Elections (Namfrel) has also raised concern over the sharp increase in the ARMM voting population, which was noted by the National Statistics Coordination Board (NSCB) as early as 2007.

As of May 14, 2007, the NSCB said the region had nearly 1.3 million voters, or an increase of almost 30 percent compared to the 2004 figure, a "remarkable" increase, it said, should only be between 6 percent and 8 percent.

The ARMM, according to Namfrel, had "the highest increase from 2007 to 2010, at 61.02 percent following a 21 percent drop from the 2004 to 2007 elections, it said. Edwin Fernandez, Inquirer Mindanao

COA finds anomalies in Vizcaya hospital deal

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—The Commission on Audit (COA) has flashed transactions involving the purchase of P3.6 million worth of hospital equipment, and directed Gov. Luisa Cuaresma and 15 other officials and employees to explain alleged irregularities it noted in the purchase.

In a notice of suspension, COA cited at least eight violations, including missing bidding documents, lack of officials' signatures and other questionable acts allegedly committed by personnel of the province.

COA auditor Ethel Guinto-Sua, former Board Member Glenn Alan, provincial administrator Manuel Tabora, provincial legal officer Desiderio Wico, acting provincial treasurer Rhoda Marcelo and five other employees in the alleged irregularities.

The notice, signed by audit team leader Florentino Ligsabens and supervising auditor Marianna Manigque, questioned the provincial government's release of P4.6 million as partial payment to a supplier, Medikals Philippines Inc., despite the alleged irregularities.

Splitting of payment as the P36 million contract is also prohibited, the COA said.

The officials were given until Feb. 17 to submit the missing documents and their explanation. The COA would disallow the transactions should they fail to comply with the order.

The inquiries on "missing receipt Certificates" led the auditor to be coached through her mobile phone. Whatever of her staff said she was out of her office.

Tabora, however, said the officials had complied with the COA memorandum and met with state auditors to explain their side. He said provincial officials asked COA for more time.

Tabora said officials committed some lapses as cited by COA, but it was only to hasten the implementation of the project.

The equipment, which include an operating table, a delivery table, an anesthesia machine, a blood bank refrigerator, intensive care unit (ICU) monitor and operating room lights were part of a P36 million purchase funds by the provincial government for Nueva Vizcaya Provincial Hospital (NVPH) in late 2008.

Medikals delivered the equipment in April 2010 but the NVPH cited, Dr. Edwin Gallapon, refused to accept them because these did not conform to specifications set by the Department of Health. Melvin Gascon, Inquirer Northern Luzon

Church braces for new war on Boracay casino plan

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
Inquirer Visayas

ILOILO CITY—The parish priest of Boracay Island has slammed renewed efforts to build a casino in the popular island resort.

Fr. Magloire Pinero, priest of the Holy Rosary Parish, and parishioners and community members in Boracay would block attempts to put up a casino on the island.

"We have only learned that the municipal council has passed a resolution endorsing the proposal. There was no consultation among the community." Pinero told Inquirer in a telephone interview on Monday.

The municipal council of Malay on Jan. 25 passed a resolution endorsing the proposal of Caribbean Development Manager Aaron Gray (CDMI) to build a casino at the 120-hectare Boracays and Discovery Resort Golf and Country Club at the northern end of the 1,032-hectare island.

In its resolution, the council said the casino would bring additional revenue to the municipality and also attract more tourists.

It said Boracay was an ideal location for a casino because it was "remote, exclusive and well-contained." Access to the facility would be restricted to only those who would play in the casino.

In a letter on Jan. 3, CDMI president Noel Cardin said the casino operators would be segregated and accessible only to foreigners, members of an exclusive club and event guests and residents.

Cardin said the casino would bring added income during bad weather when tourists are prevented from engaging in outdoor activities.

Pinero, however, said parishioners and other residents of Boracay would hold rallies against the casino.

"The casino may be legal but we are fighting it on moral grounds," he said.

Pinero also questioned the basis for the municipal council's approval of the project.

"Is it really needed? The reason to needs Boracay to earn money but Boracay does not need a casino. We don't need to attract tourists anymore because she is loved as already popular and richer, getting crowded," he said.

He said this was the third time in recent years that plans to put up a casino on the island have been pushed.

In 2003, a planned pit stop over the east shoreline after Cluster and community groups held protest actions to block the project.

In 2008, then Kalibo Bishop Romeo Lazo led opposition to another proposal to build a casino on the island.

Councilor Rowena Aguirre, chair of the committee on laws and ordinances, said the council stands by its endorsement.

CHILDREN light candles for Eliah Joy Pique, who was abducted and found dead in what could be another case of trafficking. A Norwegian and his Filipina fiancée are being held in relation to the case. YOSHI SUMIMOTO/INQUIRER VISAYAS

Charge filed in abduction-slay of girl

By Editor de los Angeles
Inquirer Visayas

CEBU CITY—Orders on Sunday filed a charge of kidnapping with homicide against a Norwegian national and his Filipina fiancée for the abduction and killing of a 6-year-old girl last week.

The charge was filed at the Cebu Provincial Prosecutor's Office.

The accused, Jens Erik Berger and Raven Gaites Ledrohan, appeared at the office of Cebu Prosecutor Marvin dela Peña for an inquest.

The two expressed confidence they would be set free because the evidence against them are weak and the evidence of their innocence is in the video we are on.

"We are innocent," said Berger, a bisexual. He said he and his fiancée were elsewhere when the girl, Eliah Joy Pique, was abducted at school and later found dead off a cliff in a coastal town.

Confident of conviction

Grenot Bajol, Cebu provincial public chief, said police were confident Berger and Ledrohan would be convicted.

Bajol made comment in detail about the alibi that Berger and Ledrohan were elsewhere when the crime was committed. "They could see that in video," said Bajol.

Salvador Sebrio, lawyer of the accused, asked the Station of Bureau of Investigation to give the documents and the accused through in advance soon to find out who's telling the truth.

NORWEGIAN Jens Erik Berger and fiancée Raven Gaites Ledrohan spend Valentine's Day at the Cebu police headquarters following their arrest for alleged involvement in the abduction and killing of 6-year-old Eliah Joy Pique. YOSHI SUMIMOTO/INQUIRER VISAYAS

The arrest agreed to be kept in police custody while their lawyer was preparing their counter affidavits.

Police claimed the arrest of Berger and Ledrohan solved the case.

Eliah Joy was leaving the Cahigan Elementary School in Minglanilla, a town 15 km south of Cebu City on June 6 when she vanished and a male Caucasian in a black Pajero approached her and offered her a ride.

Bound for Hong Kong

The accused surrendered herself to Eliah Joy as relative all the girl's mothers. Eliah Joy many with the couple despite warnings from her classmates against going with strangers, according to news updates.

Eliah Joy was found dead hours later. Her body was strapped in a bed sheet inside a sand tied to a rock in a cliff in Sitaki, a town 40.4 km south west of Cebu City.

Berger and Ledrohan were arrested on Saturday evening at the Mactan Cebu International Airport (MCIA) as they were about to leave for a flight to Hong Kong.

Several witnesses, including close children who were with Eliah Joy when she was abducted, identified Berger and Ledrohan as the ones who picked up the girl.

Ledrohan and Berger were stopped from leaving after their features matched that of sketches made on the suspects in the abduction and killing of Eliah Joy.

Witness surface

Airport police informed their counterparts in Cebu who brought a passport in Ledrohan's girl, who is a friend of Eliah Joy, to the BI228 to take a look at Ledrohan and Berger.

The group, who was reinforced, confirmed that he had supplied young girls to the foreigners.

The girl, on the other hand, identified the Filipina and the foreigner as the ones who picked up Eliah Joy while they were heading home from school last week.

Police brought Berger and Ledrohan to the headquarters of the Cebu provincial police where more classmates of Eliah Joy were waiting. They, too, positively identified the couple as the ones who picked up Eliah Joy on the day she was abducted.

Police earlier expressed belief that the case could be related to trafficking as a parent on abduction of a girl in Binglanilla was being investigated also.

The Philippines is on a watch list prepared by the US government of countries where trafficking has become a serious problem. The state department released in its financial aid if the Philippines didn't stem the tide on trafficking.

West Mindanao command of Army can't pay bills

ZAMBOANGA CITY—The military's Western Mindanao Command (Westmincom) has answered having difficulty paying its water and power bills, which have accumulated to at least P8 million.

However, Lt. Gen. Raymundo Ferrer, the incoming chief, said the mounting debt was not caused by fund misuse.

Ferrer said the amount that Westmincom gets for its water and power bills aren't enough.

He said unpaid bills become accumulated and unpaid, which will then become part of new bills.

Ferrer said part of the reason for the failure of the camp to pay its power bills was the increase in electricity rates.

"And we've been coordinating to help us look for additional funds to pay the debts," he said. Julie Alipala, Inquirer Mindanao

Kidnappers free exec's son

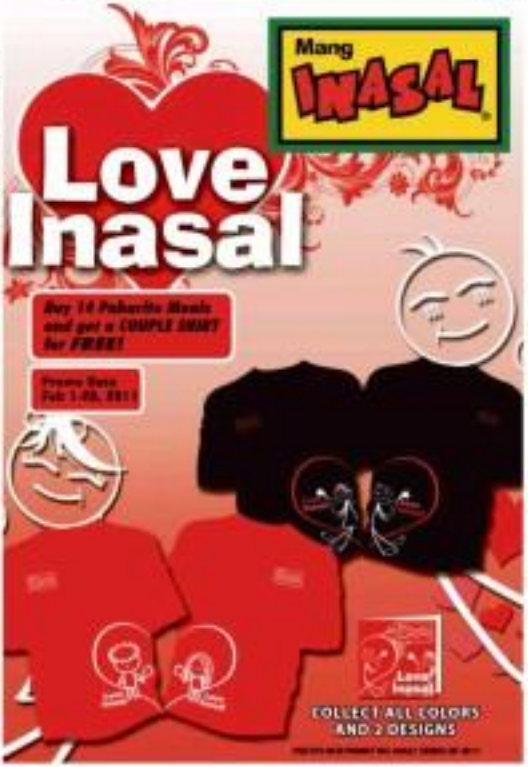
ZAMBOANGA CITY—Kidnappers freed the 6-year-old son of Shariff an Assemblyman Nasser Arasid in the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) in Basilan, authorities said on Wednesday.

The boy was snatched while walking in Lamitan City on Sunday by suspected followers of a politician based in Tabuan town, said Lt. Col. Randolph Cabangbang, spokesperson of the military's Western Mindanao Command.

Basilan Vice Gov Al Rashied Sakuldad confirmed the victim's release through negotiations and the family's payment of P900,000.

He also said a politician figured in the abduction, but denied political rivalry as the motive. He said an unsettled debt triggered the crime.

Chief Supt. Felicisimo Khu, head of the Directorate for Integrated Police Operations in the region, said the conflict was actually between the brother of Assemblyman Arasid, former Sumisip mayor Abdur Asarul, and Bonnie Biwang, caretaker of the Association of Barangay Chairmen of Tuburan. —Jodie Aligada, Inquirer Mindanao



2011 ADBOARD Officers and Directors. Seated (Left to Right): Mio Olongapo (Ako), Ricky Alegre, PR Officer (UPMG), Belen Cuaderno, Treasurer (MORES), Andre Kahn, Chairman (Ako), Trevor Celestino-Howard, Corp. Secretary (BG), Jennifer Murphy (PNAS), Standing (Left to Right): Donald Lim (MMP), Nestor Belonio (ASAP), Hector Fenoseo (PNAS), Pepito Olarte (UPMG), Alex Sy (Ako), Jose Sy (OAAP), Atty. Jov Vale (OAAP), Allan Velez (ASAP) and Mickey Quingat (SEAP). Not shown in photo is John Riel. Vice Chairman (PNSA)

PNOY INDUCTS 2011 ADBOARD OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

The 2011 officers and directors of the Advertising Board of the Philippines (Adboard) will be inducted today, February 17, 2011 by President Noynoy Aquino at the Malacañan Palace.

The Advertising Board of the Philippines (Adboard) elected its 2011 officers and board of directors during the annual general membership meeting held on January 19, 2011 at the Mandarin Oriental Hotel, Makati City.

Andre Kahn of J. Romero & Associates (4As) was re-elected as this year's Chairman while John Rojo of Bayanni Communications (PNSA) serves as his Vice Chairman. Alden Centeleje of San Miguel Foods Corporation (MORES) remains as Treasurer. Trevor Celestino-Howard of Airtime Marketing (BG) was elected Corporate Secretary and Ricky Alegre of Business Mirror (UPMG) shall be this year's PR & Information Officer.

In addition, the following individuals were appointed as members of the board who will officially represent their respective member associations: Hendrix Bakera of Pizza De Manila (ASAP), Allen Velez of Events Pool, Inc. (ASAP), Mio Olongapo of Blue Scotts, Inc. (4As), Alex Sy,Jr. of DMV Isuzu Sylu (4As), Jose Sy of Film Ads, Inc. (CAAP), Donald Lim of MBM Worldwide (MMAP), Medwin Quesque of Mondelez Philippines (MSAP), Atty. Jov Vale of Lumia Advertising (OAAP), Marlon Fernando of The Medical City (PNAS), Cecile Manrilla of Araneta Center (PANA) and Pepito Olarte of Philippine Daily Inquirer (UPMG).

As the umbrella organization of the 10 member-associations in the advertising and marketing communications industry, the Adboard continues to uphold the policy of self-regulation by furthering its mandate to unify its members while strengthening its standards of trade practices and conduct. With the new and revised Adboard, the industry may look forward to more opportunities, industry development and unified purpose-driven projects.

INQUIRER Southern Luzon

OFFICIALS of Rizal town in Laguna plan to build a replica of this US Air Force L-4 Observation plane that once landed on Tayak Hill in 1945.

Poorest Laguna town finds place in history

By Marcar Cinco
Rizal, Laguna

YES, THERE is a town named Rizal in Laguna—an almost forgotten fifth class municipality (annual income: P115 million-P125 million) that is often confused with the urbanized and popular Rizal province.

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An even bigger confusion has arisen in mailing addresses in Rizal town's sitiopolis, one of its 11 barangays. (The more known Antipolo is a first class city of Rizal.)

Both Rizal and Laguna provinces belong to the Calabarzon region.

Rizal Vice Mayor Ferdinand Samague would rather call it an "identity crisis," stating that even government officials from other municipalities are oblivious of his town's existence.

"We always have to go through some stories of questioning: Where in Rizal are you from? Montalban? Binangonan? So it is possible to have a province within a province?" he says.

Even after explaining that the town is in Laguna, he adds, the next question will be: Where is it?

Rizal town, with a population of only 31,000 and a land area of 27 square kilometers, is at the center of the most popular towns of Pagsanjan and Cavinti, and San Pablo City, which amplifies the disparity.

"Rizal we have here the tourism highway. Only five kilometers," Samague says in jest.

Poorest town

Samague believes the "confusing identity" will begin still, has hampered the municipality's progress for the past 92 years since it's foundation.

With a yearly income of only around P11 million, Rizal was joined to the bottom among all 58 Laguna municipalities.

"We need to have our own identity first," Samague says.

This, town officials underlook their research and stumbled last month upon a piece of history about a 300-meter plateau in the remote village of Talo called the Tayak Hill. This, they say, is the key to Rizal's progress.

According to the books titled "Guerrilla Interview," authored by David Sweggins, and "For Love of Freedom," by Jose Hernandez, the Tayak Hill served as the command post of the Filipino-American brigade Teresa under a certain Col. Gerardo San Pedro during World War II.

The book reveals that in January 1945, San Pedro's unit saved three American soldiers aboard a fatally plane that swooped down near the area. The site, the records said, gave the soldiers a vantage view of Laguna.

About an hour's walk from the plateau is an 11-km field where Filipino and American troops built a 800-meter runway for aircraft that flew forces in and out.

In February 1945, the field was used as a dropping point for food, medicine supplies and war materials. It was also on this airstrip that Virginia Climaco Romualdez took off to rejoin her husband, Gen. Carlos Romulo, in Mindoro.

"Even recently at the municipal government did not have this [information] until today," Samague says.

Landmark

The municipal government has tagged the area as the "The Landing Point," and is set to build a replica of a US Air Force L-4 Observation plane that once landed there in 1945.

Samague says this will serve as a historical landmark for Rizal, which he hopes would begin to attract tourists to the town.

"People go to Nagcarlan because of the underground cemetery. San Pablo has the seven lakes. Calauan is known for its pineapples, while Liliw is known as the Leather (slippers) capital. Now, Rizal will be known as 'The Landing Point,'" he says.

Samague, who also heads the municipal tourism office, says the counties projects include establishing an adventure park atop the Tayak Hill.

A Sports Tourism Adventure—triathlon, aworld and paintball competitions, and paragliding—will be held in April.

Regular sports activities will also give tourists reason for coming back, Samague says.

"Other towns are already on the stage of promoting [their products]. But us, we have just started," the vice mayor says.

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₱10	Saudi Arabia, UAE

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COMMAND CONFERENCE
President Aquino presides over Wednesday's command conference attended by Defense Secretary Voltaire Gazmin, Armed Forces of the Philippines Chief of Staff Gen. Ricardo David, and senior military officers at the AFP General Headquarters in Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City.

BEHIND THE NEWS

Why P-Noy boycotted Nobel rites in Oslo

HOPING to secure leniency from the Chinese government and spare the lives of at least five Filipinos on death row because of drug-related cases, President Aquino decided to boycott the Nobel Peace Prize awarding ceremony for dissident Chinese dissident Liu Xiaobo in Oslo in December last year.

Almost 70 others were convicted and sentenced to death with two years reprieve and may have a chance to have their sentence commuted to life imprisonment on the basis of good behavior.

The Philippines is among 19 countries, including China, that did not send representatives to the ceremony attended by at least 45 countries and granted by high-ranking Chinese officials.

Ms Aquino's decision drew criticisms from human rights activists, but he said: "Our interest [is] to advance our citizens' needs first."

Learning about the Philippine government's appeal, Chinese foreign ministry spokesperson Jiang Yu told reporters that "China's judiciary handled the cases of the five Philippine drug traffickers independently and in accordance with law." Inquirer Research

P-Noy seeks China mercy; Beijing says death verdict final

From page A1

pronouncement," Ms. Aquino said before the meeting with Wong and after his calls to the Chinese leader since Friday were unanswered.

He said he wrote a letter to Chinese leaders in August but sent for the communication of the death sentences to life imprisonment, calling the plan "very, very reasonable."

Facing executions on Monday in the southern city of Guangzhou are Sharon Cruz, 41, a father of five children; Sally Ordoñez-Villanueva, 52, a mother of two; and Elizabeth Batain, 38, on Tuesday in Shenzhen, near Hong Kong.

The trio—who would be the first Philippine nationals executed in China—were convicted separately of smuggling heroin into China in 2008, said the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA).

Cruz and Villanueva were each found carrying more than 6,000 grams of heroin, while 8,000 grams were seized from Batain.

No sign of relenting

The Chinese Embassy in Manila has shown no sign of its government relenting.

"The death sentences on the three Filipino drug traffickers is the final verdict by the Chinese judicial authorities in accordance with law," the embassy said in a statement yesterday.

Six criminals (facing two death penalties) and human rights and civil interests have been protected in accordance with law."

The embassy would help relatives who may want to visit the three in prison before their execution, the statement said, adding that it hoped the case would not affect diplomatic ties.

Mr. Aquino said he had also raised with the Chinese ambassador in Manila his concerns about 70 other Filipinos in jail in China for drug trafficking.

302 drug cases

Sen. Loren Legarda said DFA records showed that of the 302 Filipinos facing drug-related cases in Asia, 305 were in China, 26 in Hong Kong, and 17 in Malaysia.

Legarda said five of the cases in China were moved out the death penalty without reprieve and 78 death sentences with two-year reprieve. There are 15 cases given life imprisonment sentences, 68 with fixed-term imprisonment and 27 pending cases, she said.

Mr. Aquino said that he discussed with the Chinese ambassador last year his concerns about the 50 Filipinos in jail for drug trafficking in China.

But he said that according to the Chinese ambassador, Beijing was "very stern" with its drug laws because the use of prohibited drugs was a major concern in the country.

Mr. Aquino assumed that "to a degree" the appeal was different in the cases of the three Filipinos because they involved a large volume of drugs.

"Drugs is a worldwide problem and we have to respect their sovereignty and we can't say anything about the process of the trial ... At the same time, we are making a last ditch effort," the President said.

Arrested traffickers

Mr. Aquino also pointed out that many Chinese drug traffickers had been arrested in the Philippines but could not face execution because the country had abolished capital punishment.

"We'd like to see reciprocity, hopefully," he said.

In a statement, Binay applauded Beijing to decline to lift its imprisonment, the country's sentencing, citing humanitarian reasons.

"We do not question the decision of the Chinese courts in meting the death penalty to the accused. However, the accused should not be punished to this case," said Binay who is also presidential adviser on overseas Filipino workers' (OFW) concerns.

Binay noted that the OFWs were "ordinary Filipinos" who left the country in search for a better life for their families. He said they were taken advantage of by drug syndicates and made to carry illegal drugs in exchange for easy money.

No legal remedy

Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago said that the Philippine government had no legal remedy to prevent the execution of the three Filipinos.

"We can personally send our secretary of foreign affairs or, in what happened some times in the past with past presidents, even President Aquino could go there and beg for the lives of these people," she told reporters.

"But basically all we can do is appeal. There is no legal remedy that will make it possible for them to lift the death penalty," said Santiago, an expert in international law.

She said one remedy was to claim "denial of justice" but so by it, say, the Philippines could show that the death penalty reserved only Filipinos and excluded Chinese citizens.

"But I'm afraid the Chinese court did was right according to Chinese law, we have no right to tells that they were wrong," she said on Filipinos. "We cannot second-guess that perhaps, they have committed an error because we don't want this to happen even now."

THE MEACH
Foreign Undersecretary Rodolfo Cortejo Jr. (right) and DFA Spokesperson Eduardo Malaya show a plastic bag containing 6 kg of flour to demonstrate the approximate amount of heroin seized from the persons of China-pinged Filipino "drug mules" to be executed in China next week.

Santiago said the case should serve as a "lesson" for Filipinos not to get involved in drug trafficking especially in countries like China and Singapore, which have very strict laws on it.

Present at every stage

Foreign Undersecretary Esteban Conejos Jr. said in the DFA had been involved in the cases of the Filipinos since their arrest.

"Immediately at every stage of the judicial proceedings of this case, from investigation to trial to appeal to final review before the Supreme People's Court in Beijing, our three nationals were represented by competent lawyers," he said.

"Our embassy provided legal and consular assistance to our three nationals," he said. "We will see how and we're able to assist what we want to achieve."

The scheduled executions come after cries shifted over the deaths of eight Hong Kong citizens in a bungled late hostage rescue attempt in the Philippines.

Officials in Hong Kong were disappointed by Mr. Aquino's subsequent decision to clap another criminal charges against several police officials involved in the fiasco. With reports from Christine T. Esguerra, Marlon Ramos, AP and AFP

Poor mother's dream of better life . . .

From page A1

down on the syndicate by posing as a courier in a bid to secure a specimen for her case.

"I am willing to testify if needed just to explain to the Chinese government the role played by the brother in the recruitment of a big time drug syndicate of Nigerians Wilson Ibrag operating in Asia, under the agency's project called Operation 'Bone Run,'" Marcelino said.

Ordinario said that in one operation, he swallowed 54 plastic capsules each containing 12 grams of heroin.

"I swallowed to help the mother-in- for my sister," Ordinario said. "We know the it put a stop to."

He said most of those 10 persons in jail were just victims of the drug syndicate.

Package for 'boss'

Villanueva had worked as a domestic helper in Macau in 2006 before she left for China.

Thirty, she was promised by a Chinese-born mate that the new job would just be easy. She would just supervise the delivery of delicate spare parts.

Ordinario said that before his sister's departure from Manila, Villanueva was given a package by her former Macau employer.

"It's for the boss," Villanueva was told. She had to deliver the package in the factory in Macau.

When she arrived at the Baiyun airport, Chinese customs authorities found in her possession 6,174.0 kilograms of heroin.

Sally was charged with violation of Article 347 of the Criminal Law of the People's Republic of China, a crime punishable by death by firing squad.

"She didn't know the package contained heroin," Ordinario said in an interview with the inquirer on Wednesday, a day after Villanueva's family was informed by the Department of Foreign Affairs (DFA) of the execution.

She is one of three Filipinos to be executed for drug offenses on Monday in China.

Also Peruvian Jeperson Binay visited Ordinario's home in Manila on Tuesday night. He promised assistance to Villanueva's family and offered help in sending relatives to Xiamen on the scheduled date of execution.

'Only a victim'

Villanueva's mother Basilia, said she thought the DFA would update the family about her daughter's condition and that she would get a letter from her.

Instead, the family was told

AT DEATH'S DOOR *All Sally Villanueva wanted was to help her husband's family. Now it would appear she won't even have a life if her scheduled execution on Monday, Feb. 21, is not stopped.*

about the sad fate of her daughter and that two members of her family would be taken to Xiamen to see the doomed woman one last time.

"This is unacceptable. My daughter is innocent. She is only a victim," the mother cried.

Villanueva's youngest sister Marylene was also in tears.

"The children will never be grow up if the execution goes through without their knowing what happened to their mother, that they will not see her again," Marylene said.

Villanueva's children—Princess Mae Joy 12, and Lemuel, 10—have not been told about the fate of their mother, Marylene said.

Sally's husband Elias has also refused to talk about his wife.

Crackdown

Marcelino described Virgen Ann Home Visit" as the first major accomplishment of Task Force Drug Courier in which he had been assigned as director for intelligence.

In coordination with their foreign counterparts, PDEA agents led by Marcelino travelled and infiltrated the syndicate all the way from Manila to Bangkok, Kuala Lumpur and Guangzhou.

As a result, the group rescued Rowena Villiez, a resident of Cabanatuan City, Nueva Ecija, a possible courier.

In Kuala Lumpur, the group rescued the arrest of eight Nigerians, two Filipino women, a Thai woman and a Malaysian woman and seized two kilos of cocaine.

In Guangzhou, Marcelino said, the group arrested a Nigerian and a Chinese woman and confiscated a kilo of heroin.

Marcelino said operations in Manila resulted in the arrest of a Malaysian and the seizure of 19 kilos of "shabu" from the syndicate that operated in Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam, Cambodia, Peru, Netherlands, China, Brazil, Laos, Macao and the Philippines.

THE DAILY GOSPEL

FEBRUARY 17 (Thursday)
Psalter: Week 2
6th Week in Ordinary Time or Feast Founders of the Order of Servants

Ps 145: 8-9, 15-16, 17-18, 19-20 and 21-22
Gen 9:1-13
from heaven the Lord looks down on the earth

1st Reading:
God blessed Noah and his sons and he said to them, 'Be fruitful, multiply and fill the earth. Fear and dread of you will be in all the animals of the earth and in all the birds of the air, everything that creeps on the ground and all the fish of the sea. They are placed in your hands. Everything that moves and lives shall be food for you; as I gave you the green plants, I have now given you everything. Only you shall not eat flesh with its life, that is its blood. But I will also demand a reckoning for your blood shed, a reckoning from every animal I will demand a reckoning for the life of his fellow-man. He who sheds the blood of man shall have his blood shed by man; for in the image of God has God made man.

As for you, be fruitful and increase, abound on the earth and be master of it.' God spoke to Noah and his son, 'See I am making a covenant with you and with your descendants after you, also with every living animal with you: birds, cattle, beasts, with every living creature of the earth that comes out of the ark. I establish my covenant with you. Never again will all bodies be destroyed by the waters of the flood. Never again will there be a flood to devastate the earth.' God said, 'This is the sign of the covenant I make between me and you, and every animal living with you for all future generations. I set my bow in the clouds and it will be a sign of the covenant between me and the earth.

Gospel: Mk 8:27-33

Jesus asked his disciples, 'Who do people say I am?' And they told him, 'Some say you are John the Baptist; others say you are Elijah or one of the prophets.'

Then Jesus asked them, 'But you, who do you say I am?' Peter answered, 'You are the Messiah.' And he ordered them sternly not to speak about him. Jesus then began to teach them that the Son of Man had to suffer many things and be rejected by the elders, the chief priests and the teachers of the law, to be killed and after three days rise again. Jesus said all this quite openly so that Peter took him aside and began to protest strongly. But Jesus turning around, and looking at his disciples, rebuked Peter saying, 'Get behind me Satan! You are not thinking, not as God does, but as people do.'

The Word of the Lord.

...I've been complaining about many things in my life, talking why God. And in this or that to happen. But when I look back and see what God has done for me, I realize that God knows best. I cannot compare my trials with God's love. He truly knows what I really need. Jesus, at times, whether we do it or not, loves us.

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SCHEDULE OF TECHNICAL SEMINARS AND PRODUCT PRESENTATION

FEBRUARY 18, 2011

Session 1 *FOOD SAFETY*
10 AM – 12NN / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Mr. Ed Hitch, Director, Food Safety Education American Institute of Baking, U.S.A.
Hosted by: U.S. Wheat Associates

Session 2 *TAIWAN BAKING SCHOOL SEMINAR*
11AM – 2PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Hosted by: Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association, Inc.

Session 3 *FERNA'S INGREDIENTS OF SUCCESS* (A Baking & Food Service Demonstration)
2PM – 5PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Presenter: Chef Stepan van Schoonbeamp
Food Tech. Mgr., Frost Bos, Australia
Hosted by: Ferna Corporation

Session 4 *FRUITFUL IDEAS & SPARKLING DESIGNS FOR YOUR CAKES & PASTRIES*
4PM – 7PM / WTC Lobby
Presenters: Mr. Yves Keyaerts, Export Mgr., Bakels Europe
Chef James Antolin, Chef Clyden San Pedro
Pastry Alliance of the Phils.
Hosted by: Bakels Philippines, Inc.

FEBRUARY 19, 2011

Session 5 *CALIFORNIA RAISINS, THE WISE CHOICE*
10 AM – 1PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Presenter: Chef Yukichi Matsubara
Grand Chef, The Loaf
Hosted by: Raisin Administrative Committee

Session 6 *FOOD SAFETY*
10 AM – 12NN / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Mr. Ed Hitch, Director, Food Safety Education American Institute of Baking, U.S.A.
Hosted by: U.S. Wheat Associates

Session 7 *LAUNCHING OF AUSFINE CHEESE*
12NN – 2PM / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Chef Erma Consista, Tech. Center Head
Hosted by: Actron Industries, Inc.

Session 8 *THE 2nd AMBIANTE CAKE DECORATING COMPETITION*
1PM – 4PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Judges: Chef James Antolin / Chef Penk Ching
Chef Buddy Trinidad, Pastry Alliance of the Phils.
Hosted by: Puratos Phils., Inc.

Session 9 *1. BERRY FRUITY IDEAS: JAMS & FILLINGS BY ANDROS*
2PM – 3PM / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Chef Philippe Agneau, Consultant, Andros
2. GREAT TASTE! GREAT VALUE! BY BERYL'S CHOCOLATE
3PM – 4PM / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Chef Joy Polo, Beryl's Technical Advisor & Head Patissier Chocolatier
Hosted by: Global Pacific Distribution Network Corp.

Session 10 *"ARRIBA PINOY PANADERO" BOOST YOUR BAKERY BUSINESS (DREAM, BELIEVE, SURVIVE, SUCCEED)*
4PM – 8PM / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Mr. Nicanor Ines, Tech. Mgr. – URC Flour Div.
Hosted by: Universal Robina Corporation

Session 11 *"TURN BAKERY BREADS & CAKES INTO GOURMET BAKESHOP OFFERING!"*
4PM – 7PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Presenter: Chef Hany Sison
Hany Sison School of Cake Decorating & Baking
Hosted by: San Miguel Mills and Magnolia, Inc.

FEBRUARY 20, 2011

Session 12 *FOOD SAFETY*
10 AM – 12NN / WTC Lobby
Presenter: Mr. Ed Hitch, Director, Food Safety Education American Institute of Baking, U.S.A.
Hosted by: U.S. Wheat Associates

Session 13 *TAIWAN BAKING SCHOOL SEMINAR*
10 AM – 1PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Hosted by: Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association, Inc.

Session 14 *UNICOMM & ZEELANDIA PRESENT: INNOVATE, CREATE, INSPIRE BAKING DEMO*
1PM – 4PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Presenter: Chef Joe Rossenberg
Pastry Chef Technical Baker, Zeelandia
Hosted by: Unicomm Ingredients Phils., Inc.

Session 15 *TAIWAN BAKING SCHOOL SEMINAR*
4 PM – 7PM / WTC Main Hall (Center Stage)
Hosted by: Filipino-Chinese Bakery Association, Inc.

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INQUIRER

OPINION

No Merci

THE SUPREME Court decision allowing the committee on justice of the House of Representatives to proceed with the impeachment complaints filed against Ombudsman Merceditas Gutierrez has given the Aquino administration's anti-corruption drive—a key campaign promise, captured in the campaign slogan "Kung walang corrupt, walang mahirap"—unexpected new life.

EDITORIAL The possibility of a reversal on a motion for reconsideration still exists, of course, but it will be difficult for the Supreme Court to reverse itself on both the key finding of the case and the central message it sought to send to the general public. The conclusion that Congress, which has the constitutional responsibility to initiate any impeachment process, should be allowed the necessary legal legroom to meet its responsibility is sound and based on solid legal and constitutional ground. The message that the Court wanted to broadcast, as expressed by Court Administrator Midas Marquez, is that it is not, contrary to public opinion, "an Arroyo Court." Reversal will only bring swift retribution from a galled and angry public.

Hence, the spirit of positivity that has filled both the session hall of Congress and the corridors of Malacañang. As more than one commentator has observed, the scandal of systemic corruption is the millstone to which the late Gen. Angelo Reyes unwittingly gave a fate cannot be resolved without the full cooperation, the legal cunning, of the ombudsman.

But the scandal scattered under Gutierrez's watch, precisely because, against the very evidence staring her and her special prosecutors in the face, she decided (when Efraim Genuino and Arroyo was still president) to enter into a plea bargain with Carlos P. Garcia, the former military comptroller whose wife and sons were caught by US immigration authorities with incontrovertible proof of unexplained (and therefore according to the law ill-gotten) wealth.

In other words, the old and new evidence presented in the hearings of both the Senate blue ribbon committee and the House committee on justice will all fall on the lap of the same official who has demonstrated an incomprehensible, bordering on criminal liability, in prosecuting high government officials for graft. The record of Gutierrez as ombudsman speaks for itself: the lowest conviction rate since the controversial Aniano Desierto, a pattern of prosecuting low-level officials, an unbecoming willingness to enter into plea bargains, above all a deliberate indifference to graft cases involving officials of the Arroyo administration (including those implicated in the fertilizer scam and the NBN-ZTE deal). Her recent appearances at hearings in both the Senate and the House, while certainly not welcome, have only confirmed public suspicion that her actions are based, not on a grand passion to rid the government of the evil of corruption, but on a policy of official banality. She does not want to offend the powers that be, whether it is the former president, or the Sandiganbayan justices, or a prima facie plunderer who happened to look into an onerous plea bargain arrangement.

The conclusion, therefore, is inescapable. To an administration committed to fighting corruption, Gutierrez is not only an embarrassment, but the biggest obstacle.

What will happen to the genuine process to have plundered the treasury, or government officials who have received bribes in exchange for official favors, or even private sector suppliers who overcharged government agencies, if the evidence gathered against them will be transformed into a case only the ombudsman can lose? If an open-and-shut case like Garcia's, where evidence comes in part of voluntary admission against self-interest and extensive property holdings on general's salary can at least, can mutate into a losing proposition, undermined by the unwillingness of special prosecutors to follow the trail of evidence where it led and their readiness to try new, unnecessary and ultimately unsuccessful fact-finding efforts, what will Gutierrez and her office do with the damning testimony (against self-interest) of the likes of George Rahuas and Antonio Lim?

The fight against corruption requires a people's champion in the Office of the Ombudsman. That can only happen if Gutierrez, finally, is impeached.

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Politics of the extraordinary

PUBLIC LIVES

Randy David

PHILIPPINE FEBRUARY 1986, Egypt February 2011—both are examples of extraordinary political upheavals that social scientists now call "extraordinary" moments in politics. They signal a departure from "normal" politics—from routine politics, from institutional procedures and rituals of representation, from government by political elites and professional bureaucrats. Such moments mark the dramatic promise of a new beginning, of a "founding" event that restores to the people their sovereign right to self-determination.

The analysis of extraordinary events like these has spawned a growing literature in the fields of popular democracy in the modern world, and the many forms it can take. Regardless of what happened to the governments that fell, the people proved uprisings in the Philippines from a third case of this developing global phenomenon. Yet Filipinos are living now as he marking the 25th anniversary of Feb ry 1, an extraordinary moment in our political history as a time when the world is reposing over the Egyptian people's own recent success in overthrowing a military dictatorship. That experience through the prism of the Egyptian people's current supremacy. And vice versa. Egypt has much to learn from what happened in the Philippines after 1986.

The politics of the extraordinary is not to be confused with the politics of the exception. The latter refers to emergencies, when the State takes exceptional measures to deal with a crisis. The declaration of martial law by Ferdinand Marcos in September 1972 is an example of this. Marcos required the proclamation of emergency as a defensive response aimed at thwarting the "Rightist-Leftist" threats against the State. The crisis, as we now know, was nothing but a pretext for instituting a dictatorship that lasted 14 years.

Marcos, of course, saw fastest line to sit on sanity different light. He proposed it as a new beginning. He called his regime the "New Society" (*Bagong Lipunan*). He claimed that it was the only alternative to the "old society" that had produced the country's many problems. Under the banner of "constitutional authoritarianism," he set out to reform the country's political institutions, to change the values and ways of political action. Having presided over the dismantling of the people were ready to be the subjects of mass training to imbue their every thought and action with the "correct" values. But what they lacked was a new model of government that would narrow the gap between rulers and ruled, and that would quickly be put in place. That lesson was tragically learned by the old political class which was forced to leave office after the first campaign of elite-led governments. That was the watershed history legacy of Edsa no-mindset.

Email: public.lives@gmail.com

Honor

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I WAS surprised by the number of true true angry and would I get late Monday agreeing with my criteria. I just wrote it out of gut feel, but as has happened on other occasions when I've done so, it seems to have struck a chord. Most of the messages sender said I managed to put into words something they might felt.

They agreed in equal measure with my two points. One, that Abraham, Tolliaver, Salonga, et al. have nothing to regret or be ashamed of in supporting Angelo Reyes. Most of the messenger senders simply defended Reyes, saying what they did was honorable, what Reyes did was merely suicide. Two, that Reyes' suicide brought back the stigma to corruption, it elevated that corruption has lethal consequences, paralyzing to the corrupt. It is such a source of shame the corrupt truly should apologize to their members for suggesting to the world they brought down up wrongly. Although one message sender added that Mikey Arroyo should not likewise apologize to Reyes, for will never have an apologize to his mother for having besmirched her name. Or his father's.

Alongside these messages, I also got another two from someone who identified himself as a Pinoy. Why today's Cavalcade is condemning Tolliaver who is just following the Phil Code of Honor by reporting an honor violator? What was dismissed into our heads, hearts, and consciousness a long time ago during brain learning was the central dictate of the Phil Code of Honor: A lasher does not lie, cheat or steal, nor does he tolerate those who do. Our generation of Cavalcade is proud of Tolliaver and the Magdalo who lived by this Code to prove personal risk and in the end of sacrificing their careers and the welfare of their families."

I'm glad there's that reaction from the ranks of the soldiers. I myself drew the line at the dishonest identity. See I salute Tolliaver and company for having both acted on their convictions, only at great cost to themselves. I agree that only something dramatic would have drawn attention to their cause, but I don't agree that a mutiny was the manner to claim respect. That is no different from those who they accused by occupying a building in Makati, drawn attention to everything except their cause. It doesn't point to general corruption to the military; it points to personal ambition on the part of certain junior officials. Or it could really be deeper yet to ego, and it's true.

But the message from the Pinoy gives me insight into why contagion defects in the military. Cadets do not remain cadets for life, as the very long. The cadet may be bombarded with a code that somehow does not extend or connect to others. But as he goes up the ladder he gets bombarded with other codes that say other things. Codes that are defended in a manner of honor too. Chief of them being the one that says, dem chain mo sili sa pinas pero, se benefician forkid, your superiors. Wearers the word, coterie's the kin.

That was the reason the cables seemed to have been turned on Tolliaver....at least for a while, though it could have become more permanent if people hadn't signaled up—and that is the reason today's Cavalcade would like to set him, and not the person he reported, not the "honor violator." Because he betrayed the "code of honor" that says thou shalt not squeal. The Tagalog puts it far more forcefully: Huwag kang magsumbong. Kapag nagsumbong ka, lumagpak ka! It's your fault, you caused us fate, you pushed him to commit suicide!

We do not sound an outcry: That is the "code of honor" that gets to overrule the one about not stealing or not refraining it to others, which applies as well to philandering, "sabungeng," plotting. You want to say: "Never mind about philandering, that savors only your spouse and/or the person you are carrying. Sin stealing and murdering? That savors the country, that savors the people. Your honor demands that you report that."

That is the downside to Reyes' act of self-destruction. It reinforces the code of silence, the code of omerta, the code of not "tatling" on your fellows as a point of honor. Even this skewed perspective, what Reyes did was honorable because he "did not drag others down" with him. Yet he could have exculpated himself more honorably yesterday in his principals. He could have assuaged his feelings of guilt, or diminished his culpability in the eyes of the public, by pointing to those who were "greedy" who produced more than their "due." But he did not. He chose to go it alone, the chose to bring his secret with him to the grave.

That was the "code of honor" loathed in Tolliaver by Reyes' camp after Reyes took his own life. That was the worry that swirled around Tolliaver when he was named the witch by his unprecedented act of suicide. That is the "code of honor" that continues to be loathed against Tolliaver by those who feel his dogged pursuit of the Garcia case. That is the secret that continues to swirl around Tolliaver centered by those in the AFP who fear losing their privileges when their secret comes.

That's when shame me about the statement of the old-school Cavaliers. There is nothing honorable about that code of honor, there's nothing heroic about those honor cods, there's nothing inner about that code of silence. It doesn't outside, it sucks.

And that's what shame me about the outraged reaction of the public to the officer in office. Tolliaver. We must lobby and honor, don't look at Reyes, look at Tolliaver and company. You want decent and brave, don't look at those who kill themselves rather than give up others, look at those who keep the hope alive rather than give in to pressure.

You people want someone go back to rotten. Go back to being rotten. Go back to being ignorant. Go back to being idolaters.

Go back to being true soldiers.

Estrada, Arroyo to the hearings?

SOME PERSPECTIVE is needed over the congressional hearings on military corruption.

A news item by reporter Marichu Villanueva in a daily published on Oct. 29, 2009, or more than six years ago, said:

"The new military chief got his marching orders yesterday from his commander in chief: Sunny on any question that is disrupting the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) should be swept, sweeping in is Gen. Jose Alio as the seventh military chief appointed here to speed up the ever-stalled modernization work.

"Now, Alio is tasked to address the military's backlogs mostly on the shortfalls of the new chief of staff. He will oversee the court-martial of junior officers as well as the investigation of other officers similarly suspected of graft," Arroyo's foreign aide Ed Ermita announced after Alio's appointment.

She also ordered the comptrollership functions to be distributed to four independent officers to make up a check-and-balance system among Management, Comptrollership, Management and Fiscal Office, the Office of the internal auditor, and the Office of Accounting Services. Except the accounting, which is headed by a civilian, the others are headed by a general or at least some other high rank.

There were several other reforms Alio implemented when he became chief of staff, among them the dismissal of the 49th Logistics Command, the dismissing of the acquiring authority of the chief of staff and the service commanders, and the transfer of land releases from Central Headquarters to the major services and their units. The justification for the so-called "land conversions"—in other cash for critical military operations—are specifically authorized by the budget—were opposed with the unfavorable reaction of the AFP rank and file, especially the retirees to the ex-Espina commander. The other reform measures would have to be described in detail to be understood.

The reform program was based on many of the findings in the October 2005 report of the Fact-Finding Commission on the Disputed Military Site (so called Feliciano Report).

With these reforms already in place, Congress would be hard pressed to think up measures to stamp out corruption in the military or justify its hearings. Perhaps to investigate the AFP by adding it to today's Pacman, Ramon Ang and Manuel Pangilinan?)

But if the hearings' aim was to shelve Defense Secretary Honasan's public image in order to encourage him to run for President in 2010, it could succeed. And that agenda of course had nothing to do with the cabalistic clue with Gudarrow Bears, now seized by former Senator Honasan.

Of course, the complainant against Gudarrow of Sup. Nini Sipac Jr., chair of the justice committee that conducted the hearings, has nothing to do with the dismissal from office later any of his by-that-time Supac as governor, ordered by the anti-Honasan who ruled him guilty of graft. Of course, the hearings had nothing to do with exacting revenge against the chief of staff whose defection to Edsa 2 was critical for its victory. Hint: all, the savings that "Revenge is a dish best served cold" is just a silly Hollywood adage.

Other points that have hardly been given attention in the news over the congressional investigations.

Invited to Gov George Ramos, who has negated the country with his description of how funds were supposedly siphoned off for corruption, was being the prospect of a long jail term because of the alleged anomalies committed while still against him in 2004. Mamasapano massacre, and would last for had 12 bank accounts containing millions of pesos and had sold a 12.8 property prompting the same to threaten him as seen. He is financially in deep trouble because of his expensive lawyers and because of his unwise investment in the Senate where he allowed him to strike a deal with the Department of Justice that involves the dropping of the misplaced-wealth case against him.

Reform measure number (or dropped numbered) first to complement Ligot and Bich Carlos Garcia from January 2000 to July 2002.

Sen. Joggers Estrada quite dramatically contrasted Ligot with photos of houses she ordered demolished when she was mayor of San Juan. Ligot's house, which obviously he couldn't have afforded on an officer's salary.

What many, including this senator, seemed to have overlooked in the questioning of Ligot was comptroller from October 1999 to March 2001. That was during the term of the senator's father, world. If Mahuza himself was budget officer for a year during the Marcos administration.

I hope the committee realized his father, Ligot's contribution is what when he was comptroller, before his regrets to the Senate.

Sen. Franklin Drilon said recently that he wants to summon Ligot's wife, Estrella, to testify on military corruption. She shouldn't Estrada Legarda by for the first time she was called to summoned, since Ligot and Estrada started their careers as comptroller and budget officer during his term? Interior can also be summoned for the hammock, unexplained expenses for his "biggest military victory," the capture of Muslim Misuari Liberation Front Camp Abubakar in 2000.

But perhaps our personal favorite, and Drilon was only thinking of summoning Arroyo to give a lecture on how to quickly but judicially reform the military while upholding its integrity and esteem: Is) his public image?

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Outlook

Rigoberto Tiglao

'Life is not a race'

THERE IS really something about growing up, we change, and most of the time we change into what we said we would never be.

In youngness, we dream of castles and dragons, zombies and beasts of joys. We go home after school and tell our parents we want to become astronauts or firemen. And girls love to play teachers or princesses having tea in the garden or so.

But as we grow up, we learn the divorce and fancies behind. Leaders are born, our old toys gather dust, while the old dragons are slain. We never run, and becoming big is then because we realize that working is an office pays more.

Young Blood

Ivanie Dee Lazaguen

We want to know what the young ars thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? By welcome contributions from the twenty-something and below. —Ed.

To be an astronaut is no longer our ambition because we have to study in some foreign university to have a chance in becoming one, and that is very difficult, as many Filipinos, growing up means losing practical. And to be practical means giving up our youthful dreams.

In Tim Burton's movie version of our well loved fairy tale, Alice returns to Wonderland without any recollection that she was there when she was still a child. She finds out of place, confused and undermining. When the Caterpillar tells her she is the professed "champion" or savior, he also warns that she has lost her "muchness."

Now as I look to how life takes its course and how we respond to it, I realize that Burton's movie is more than just her vision. We all do, and when it comes to a time we never admit it.

The funny thing about growing up is that we lose sight of the things we once wanted. As adults, we seem to pursue or learn more than ourselves. We strive to become what our friends and society tell us we should be. Assuming the roles, we don't just consult other people, we let them make the decisions for us and we follow. While we think of ourselves as adults, we actually let other influences the way we dress up and the choices we make. We forget that growing up is not about changing ourselves but building yourself by learning from the experiences and the setbacks and making yourself ready for what comes next. We grow up to adventure. We go, we fall, we pick ourselves up, and we go on.

The appeal of life is something nobody can follow or interpret. It is like a science, where a lot of things and experiments are done by its hands and then more study. Like a person, we know where we want to go and when we want. It is when we grow up that we sometimes ask ourselves a lot of questions, like, Can I do it? Is it possible? Then we doubt ourselves, then we say we cannot.

So, dreams, we know is what we wanted. We wanted a top of a basketball, and when we get there we know they were ours.

Now that we are adults, it's the other way around. Things attract us, and we buy them. Then we rely on them and look out happiness on them. We then control things, but now the same things control us.

In primary school we met a lot of different kids. Some were from the neighborhood, most were not. Quite accidentally we became friends with everyone, played with them, and were best friends.

Today, one's friends are usually from his own circle. We have set some standards as to who is a right friend for us and who is not.

Sometimes, I wonder why we make life so complicated. Then I realize that we are just making life hard for ourselves.

Maybe it's time we see flaws and work over the things we do. Do we still have time to do those? Or are we just doing them out of routine?

"Life is a basketball" is a typical grown-up observation. But when we look at life as adventure, we appreciate the things that come to us—the passions, the blessings, even the pressing ones during bitter times. Adventure is real independence. It's our desire that we treasure.

It's not too late to find ourselves in this adventure. We just have to take our time and believe that in growing up, we are not really facing challenges but we have risks to climb to attain happiness. Let's keep in mind the wise words of someone whose name can spoil our fun: "When you rub your eye so fast to get to somewhere, you miss the fun of getting there. Life is not a race, so take it slowly, enjoy the inside before the outside."

Ivan Alvi Salvagno, 19, is a second year AB English student at the University of Baguio.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS

Send your contributions by e-mail to youngbloodinq@yahoo.com. Please write your full name, address, age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in (if employed, the place you're working and the company you work with). Contributions to Youngblood should not have been previously published.

PH as state party in International Criminal Court

A FEW more pushes and a significant feature will be added to the Philippines' history as a democratic nation. A few more steps and the Philippines will stand side by side with great democratic countries that have made the Statute of Rome and joined the International Criminal Court (ICC).

After years of lobbying by ICC advocates in the Philippines, it looks like the waiting will soon be over. But two initiatives—the executive and the legislative branches of government—still have to help push the birthing.

It has to be said: The Rome Statute is the founding treaty of the ICC, the first permanent international court that is capable of trying perpetrators of genocide, crimes against humanity and war crimes. Hailed as a breakthrough in The Hague, The Netherlands, the ICC represents one of the world's most significant opportunities to prevent or disallow future the double-and devastation caused by conflict. Created in 2002, the ICC is now a fully functioning international court, with all of the usual officials of the court in place.

With the 2010 ratification by Maldives, Bangladesh, Seychelles and Sao Tome, the number of ICC state parties has reached 114 or more than half of the world's nations. Ratifying the statute will mean putting the global instrument to real purpose.

The good news is that the only remaining government agency hesitation that had consistently opposed ratification, the Department of National Defense, has finally changed its mind. The decision for the ICC ICHC Philippines has written a letter to President Aquino asking that his office transmit the ratification bill to the Senate. This move is required by the Constitution. A two-thirds vote of the Senate is needed for the bill to be passed.

The Philippines is among the 139 signatory states having signed the statute in 2000, but is one of the among the state parties now numbering 114. Being a signatory is one thing, getting a country to ratify and participate is another. The Philippines

Human Face

Ma. Ceres P. Doyo

has been downgrading to the ICC and was actively engaged in the United Nations Diplomatic Conference of Plenipotentiaries on the Establishment of an ICC in 1998. The reason that the Philippines had demonstrated its commitment to the international justice as enshrined in the Rome Statute of the ICC.

According to the CHC, ratifying the treaty would be consistent with the Philippine government's commitment to uphold human rights as enshrined in the Constitution, and to achieve international law as enforced by The Philippine Act on Crimes against International Humanitarian Law, Genocide, and Other Crimes against Humanity, adopted on Dec. 11, 2009. Mr. Aquino reaffirmed this commitment during International Human Rights Day in December last year.

Former CHC co-chair and now head of the Commission on Human Rights Etta Rosales has stressed that "ratifying the Rome Statute would demonstrate the commitment of the new government of the Philippines to uphold justice, human rights and the rule of law." She urged Aquino to "make sure the prompt treatment of the ratification matter to show the Philippines to continue its path towards becoming a state party to the treaty."

Senate stands ICC President and Judge Sang Hyun Song said he is meeting the Philippines for the second time and he hopes to meet with the President. Senators Miriam Defensor-Santiago and Loren Legarda, said to be ICC advocates, are expected to move for the Senate to adopt the ratification bill. But the President has to make the first move.

Ma. cmdoyo@inquirer.net

Brides and young prostitutes

Commentary

Dennis Murphy

HE WERE looking toward the backdoor of the chapel for the bride's appearance, when suddenly the door flew open, blown in by the strong Bataan winds, and there stood the bride. Her white veil and bridal dress blew wildly about her. She was the very image of beauty, passion, mystery and excitement.

The bride, Dianne Calderon, and fiancé Intel Inter Secretary Benby Sullivan's son, Sinu, got married in a beautiful wedding ceremony that had the vow of traditionals rising in front of us to seats, and the older men and women nodding as if to say "Yes, this is the way it should be."

It happens often in the Philippines that most of us just see outstanding marketing, you see or hear of something, regarding of human beings, about of children. The same afternoon of the wedding, we heard of the 12- and 13-year-old prostitutes of Tondo whose lives are in cheap contrast with that of the bride. The girls are scavengers during the day and at night they are prostitutes for the truck drivers, half-blank homeless, garbage workers and the other nameless men who hang around the piers. The charge is P80 to P50 to feel the girl's breasts and private parts (jokingly), while sex is P500 (joking price), often in a garbage truck. The girls have been men a night for sex on average, but some nights they are long lines. "I just lay down," one girl said of her experience. The whole encounter is over in a matter of seconds.

The Tondo encounter was first reported in Senator's Santiago's classbook" on DWA 7.

There is much beauty and goodness in the country, but also much cruelty. Sometimes we see the same wrestling right day after day. In the Bataan Province of the ET, a man of many years, 11 years old perhaps, offers sex and bags. As he or she sits still, people bring her dates to the afternoons, man a sad smile once her face, or a cat cup in

her hand and leave her. They come just in the morning to get her inborn the dark heart is overwhelmed with grief, wrestling with the fact that in Bataan there are a city in her cup, but she doesn't seem to notice. Other small children pass by holding their mothers' hands. Bibles pass in their mother's arms. All the children look down at the girl as well, wondering who she was for to see this. It's hard to get the little girl's face and hatch into one of your control.

It is impossible for anyone who travels through the city to miss children pushing scavenger's carts or begging for money or sight, or unindeed not see the boy without one leg.

It should be very difficult in plunder in this country when there is existence everywhere: dire plunder is fraud, murderous and housing taken from poor children. It's easier to plunder, as Marcos did and to think among his wealthy friends. Corruption in poor countries is brazen disregard of God's poor children.

It is hard to determine who is guilty. The children are not guilty; neither are their parents really guilty—most are living in poverty. Even the groups may not be fully guilty because they provide the grow up in certain circumstances in the old days.

The powerful are guilty and who else? In the Old Testament the prophets singled out kings and rich men as the ones who were responsible for the ills that God punished the whole people, nations and servants, priests and people, rich and poor. Theologians tell us that in the New Testament we are saved or not as a whole people and not as individuals. It isn't just their rhetoric to say we are all guilty for the situation done to children.

While many people obtain the young and old servants, there are others who give their lives for the cause. One such person is Sr. Feliciana de Lima of Iriga, Camarines Sur, who is no longer able to climb Mt. Iriga to bring literacy programs and agricultural crops to the forgotten high up on the mountain. She began her work with the Dumagat tribe, but she soon realized that the children of the tribe were not accredited elementary school with regular teachers and retain the children to high school and even college). She gives each child a marketable skill, such as farming, carpentry, depending on their talents, their backgrounds, special problems and their hopes in life.

People like Sister Feliciae restore the guilt that many otherwise fall on us for our failure to help the poor, especially children and women. She saves many more pulling with her, however.

* * *

Before young people appropriate the customs of the struggle of the Egyptian people to them, videos sent to the Internet, Facebook and Twitter, they should remember that it was the Egyptian people fighting for the future of the revolution against the police forces in Tahrir Square, men in their 40s, 50s and even 60s, men with prominent moustaches and grey hair, were right in the middle of the struggle punching away and being punched.

Denis Murphy works with the Urban Poor Associates. His e-mail address is upa@pinoymail.com

In The News

Hosni Mubarak

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Grossly unfair, exceeds hyperbole

LETTERS

THE EDITORIAL titled "Going willfulness" (Inquirer, 2/15/11) is over-the-top. Saying that President Aquino "has done a Marcos, in deeds, a Mubarak" goes beyond hyperbole as grossly unfair. I understand the occupational interest of a newspaper in the Freedom of Information (FOI) bill. I might say the statements that "President Aquino has shredded the international instruments toward freedom and democracy" is at least debatable. But that P-Noy "is a Marcos, in deeds, a Mubarak"? How does one respond to that? "I am not a bastard!"? This is a perfect example of hysteria.

The Constitution did not mean to abuse the presidential power to declare kilts "urgent." The Cabinet meeting to discuss priority bills lasted seven hours because the President had detailed questions about each bill. This is the response.

—JOEL LAGUMBAY
Secretary, Local Concourse
National Anti-Poverty Commission

A lawyer's ruminations on Mercí's credibility

MARIA MARIA MERCEDITAS Gutierrez may be correct. Absent any proof to the contrary, an accused is presumed innocent of what Maria Mercí is handled from the plea bargain with former solicitor extraordinaire Carlos Garcia. Her process that she only did what was legally proper and beneficial to the country. The same may be said of the special prosecutor who prosecuted and secured one deal. We wholeheartedly join her in her righteous indignation at the ironic congressional hearing that "serious questions … as to misuse or misappropriation" of any of them had received any monetary consideration for the deal.

Well said. She might have thought she came out of that bruising encounter bad, and rightly so, in agony and dignity intact.

But not so fast. Matters before anyone starts to get her up on a pedestal, let us remember another. The painful deliberations of former Commission on Audit official Heidi Mendoza were a total eye-opener—but in any a vast surprise. The whole nation wept with and rallied behind her as she shed tears for her family and her family's as a consequence of her brave revelations at the same hearing. Noteworthy was her allusion to a blackmailing official who was said to have called her boss at the CSA to tell her to go "bwisit-bwisit" with her audit of the military funds—and naturally more pertinently Gen-Z Garcia's intransigence.

As pivotal things go in this country, that part of Mendoza's testimony is highly credible. The indefinite suspension from her boss at the CSA deserves perfectly with such a history. And whether the self-proclaimed civil lawyer Executive Secretary Eduardo Ermita, the people before Mendoza beyond any reasonable doubt, she had no reason to malign an accuser on full of danger to herself and her whole family—as she has been doing since 2005. Indeed, her personal career would appear, and more so with her life and good-paying job. To us, she is a hero here as he cherished and preserved—with people power, if need be.

Now back to Gutierrez. In light that of the usually credible testimony of Mendoza, does anyone really believe no one in Malacañang (or very close to someone there) ever called Gutierrez herself to get him on Garcia? We, indeed, do not have to have damaged hands, hear "smog on you!" a la Ismil's entrances in this country infinitely more valuable than any demonstration the Senate Bureau of Filipino can churn out any day. Given the egregious transmission of the Office of the Ombudsman in summoning all sorts of underlings and

CHILLING EXHALATION: Gutierrez cannot recall the truth on the Garcia plea bargain deal at a Senate hearing.

seemingly known to be allies of the dictator, it would be interesting to see how many kinds are raised to affirm their ideas and confidences in Gutierrez's integrity? By dint of sheer volume of contradictions, only three of her special prosecutors (with Garcia, it is hoped, excluding himself)?

—STEPHEN L. RODRIGUEZ
Malcolm Law Office,
Loyola Heights, Quezon City

Lifetime member rues non-transparency in UPAA

SIR: ALFONSO Pascual started his 6-year term as 20th president of the University of the Philippines System on Feb. 16, 2011. Before his election, he was president of the UP Alumni Associations (UPAA) and ex-officio alumni regent on the UP BOR (Inquirer, 2/16/11).

I call on him to highlight transparency as a key policy of his administration. Transparency was very much wanting in the past two elections of the UPAA board.

Mr. Pascual should explain to the alumni he represented in the BOR how the elections of the UPAA board members for 2008-2009 and 2009-2012 were conducted. For the 2008-2009 board, he was among the 23 candidates shown to be part of the so-called "Unity Team." Those who voted for him (which I suspect are few) have been rendered useless because many of the candidates voted for were not in the Unity Team. How could six of them, namely: Jess Gutierrez, Isabela Guerrero, Rina Linda Jayme, Rolando Andaya Jr., Pastor Pacheco and Gaz Tiongco have won when their names appeared in the grouping where we could choose only five out of 15?

How could Marlene Hidalgo and Rolando Gamarong be both in the winning team when they were in the same grouping where we could only use one of them? (Mr. Hidalgo died after serving briefly "also to replaced" him?)

For the 2009-2012 board, how were the 23 board members elected? A lifetime member of UPAA, I was not informed of the procedure during the nomination of candidates. Online elections are foreign to me. I could not take part in the election. Suddenly, a picture of the new UPAA board members, which included Ms. Pascual, appeared. Was there an election at all to choose the board members who then elected Mr. Pascual president? Were there other candidates? Who have another "Unity Team"?

When I inquired why no ballot was mailed to me, I was told there were only 25 candidates for 23 positions. Was there such a lack of interest in serving as UPAA board member? Or was there simply lack of information? I tried asking for a sample ballot just so I could check if there were only 25 candidates. None was mailed.

Who will choose his replacement in the board? What is the process?

I have been a UPAA member since 1966 when I left. I was disenfranchised. I write this open letter because, for the past five years, I could not find the proper forum for my concerns. I have never heard of a UPAA General Assembly. The only participation I remember was to vote in the plebiscite previously discussed by the Alumni Council usually the day before a general session, to a meeting of guests. Attendance I thought up the matter of the UPAA elections. I missed. I was perceived as irrelevant. But I do have suggestions on offer and they do have merits.

It pains me to see that alumni and faculty hardly pay attention to seemingly trivial matters which may actually keep the UP spirit alive. Maybe we can still be of help. It only we knew. Others have things are being done in the UPAA level.

—ANGELICA A. SIMEONG,
REE 1968, MBA 1977,
sanlaggo@cantilloup.com.ph

'Relics' of martial law still imprison Filipinos

AFTER interviewing Richard Tan's statement that the disclosures of Jose Ville Pangandaman's dictionary published in the 1970s does not carry the word "trespassing" because "it was still basic to a strong word." "Bust," "interspacing" because us, (1/6/11).

Might we be able to make the connection between the emergence of the word trespassing and martial law? I interviewed JP Hilman in 2007, as I saw the differences in clothing, particularly in the security enforced in the 60 (Arte and Bel-Air), Makati's gated rich of the late 1960s experiences—trespassing—were being reinforced everyday.

Ferdinand Marcos and his spouse Imelda were seen as trespassing (as the "missing joke" of that time indicates). The "trespassing culture" got more entrenched in governance, and as we are now, particularly in the military. (Please note Angelo Reyes' use of the term.) It has become a Filipino decision between vis-à-vis F

Lambi Jocson's writings about Filipino values being good—that's why they are values) as seen in the acceptance of trespassing in society, pre-20-something as a very present reality.

The present Blue Ribbon Committee hearing is actually a very delayed effort to have the reality of a culture that permitted plot Marcos. I think we have to acknowledge that we have so many practices that are "relics" of martial law (Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo used those extraordinary advantage) and we need to make it deliberate efforts to recognize these relics if we are to really address our issues and problems as a people.

Many practices that persisted from the martial law days have crept in and are becoming ubiquitous now in the daily lives of Filipinos. There are practices that make it so difficult for us to exercise any use of our personal reality.

—JOSEPH LANE GARCIA,
Angeles, lanes_rigan@yahoo.com

Judge for yourself: is PDI for or against Church?

ATTY. EMPEL Zamora, who is "affiliated" with the UP Department of Communication Research (UP CSRC), blasted me in his letter to the editor that, in an editorial, the Inquirer insisted that the Pope made a "classic shift" on the matter of condoms and that the Catholic Church was "morphing" rigid doctrine. He stressed that the editorial was not correct nor "seemingly fair" to its readers. (Inquirer, 2/11)

We believe that this is the first time that the broadsheet has been accused of lying. Zamora also chastised the Inquirer that it has created "racists called 'framing' and 'priming'" the readers can hear or think about certain issues, that this paper should better "feel the truth"; and that, in short, this paper's "agenda" is to discredit the Catholic Church and its leaders."

Interesting actions. But we thought all along that with more than half of its columnists, writers and contributors being either of the Church or for the Church—such as Fr. Bernardo Pelaez, Fr. Roy Cimagala, Fr. Joaquin Bernas, Fr. Bernardo Villegas, Dennis Murphy, Manuel Dayrit, Cielo Daza, actor Cesar Montano, Orobeter, Cesar Drilon, actor Cesar Montano and members of his audience—this paper could not simply go against the Catholic Church. In fact, one sincere columnist has scolded the fact that the views of priests, bishops here, are constantly censored out of the front page of this broadsheet; and that letter of admission is only supposed from the official news organ of the Vatican! Again, we would think if bishops were not so defied with what some "foreigners" columnists say, then this paper would right away try to amplify the writings of the person concerned.

At any rate, Zamora does not sound like someone from or of UP but seemingly is for the Catholic Church, or from a fringe of religious zealots with ultra-conservative and ultra-Vatican sentiments, or "conservative," especially on population issues.

We thought this paper writer would see dignify Zamora with a reply or make an unbiased statement. But it issued a short note which pitted Zamora for lack of comprehension of the "basic and liberating" distinctions between news reports and editorials. Indeed, the Inquirer's editorial position is supported in favor in this paper; he could not discuss professional policy, style and content.

In a subsequent rejoinder, which was published just hours by the Inquirer, Zamora said the acronym "is forged" the reasons. Thus perhaps accurate—"Unconscious, heedless virtue" for the Church apparent relief.

—EILEEN G. GUIÑA,
retired ambassador,
eileen@hotmail.fr

First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Lumban, Laguna
TIN. Nos. (043) 555-4003 T Telefax: (049) 555-5008
E-mail Address: flaco_2011@yahoo.com

INVITATION TO BID

The First Laguna Electric Cooperative, Inc., with office address at Brgy. Lewin, Lumban, Laguna, invites all qualified bidders to bid for its materials requirements intended for the construction of Single Phase Primary and Secondary Line for Sitio Lumot, Brgy. Bubukal, Santa Maria, Laguna with a total kilometers of lines to wit:

Single Phase	=	1.200 Kms.
Under-Built	=	1.121 Kms.
Open Secondary	=	0.509 Km.

All interested parties can secure bid documents from FBAC Secretariat starting February 11, 2011 after payment of a non-refundable fee of Three Thousand Pesos (Php 3,000.00). Submission of sealed bids will be on March 8, 2011 (Tuesday) at 2:00 P.M. at FLECO Main Office, Brgy. Lewin, LUMBAY, Laguna.

Request further to include in your sealed bids/proposal the delivery date, terms of payment and availability of stocks for evaluation purposes. Bid for one item or lump is acceptable. The BID BOND is either in the form of cash or manager's check equivalent to two and one half per cent (2.5 %) of the total bid price.

FLECO RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, RESERVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS BIDS DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) EMELITA C. ICABANDI,
PBAC CHAIRMAN

Noted by:

(Sgd.) EVANGELITO S. ESTACA
FLECO GENERAL MANAGER

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC.
SUBIC, PAMPANGA

INVITATION TO BID
2011-01

PAMPANGA II ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (PELCO II) a WCPA OF PELC ADDRESS AT SAN MIGUEL, SUBIC, PAMPANGA INVITES ALL INTERESTED QUALIFIED BIDDERS TO BID FOR THE SUPPLY, DELIVERY, INSTALLATION, TESTING AND COMMISSIONING OF ONE (1) UNIT 10 MVA POWER TRANSFORMER, WITHDRAWER TYPE WITH TAP CHANGER.

Interested parties are requested to submit the following PELCO II pre-qualification requirements, certified true copy of 1) Company Profile, 2) Registration Form BIR, DTI and SEC), Authority Permit, 4) Latest Audited Financial Statements, 5) At least two (2) Valid IDs, and, Certificate of Membership. Accreditation is required to be valid within the year of P.I. 2011-01. Original copies of requirement documents must be presented for proper authentication.

Bids shall be accompanied by a bid bond either in cash, manager's or cashier's check equivalent to two and a half percent (2.5%) of the bid total price.

Submission of qualification requirements : February 24, 2011 to March 4, 2011
Time and time of bidding : March 10, 2011 at 10:00 O'CLOCK Tuesday
Venue : PELCO II Power Office Boardroom, San Roque, Subic, Pampanga

Bid documents may be obtained from the Secretariat of the Committee upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 10,000.00 thru its Cashier/s, PELCO II Department, Tel. No. (045) 902-0474.

Qualified bidders who secured bid documents are required to mail/ respective bid documents on or before the deadline of submission. Late bids shall not be accepted. Bidder/s may authorize a representative to present the bid. Authorized representative must present his/her valid ID and authorization letter for proper identification.

Sold bid documents are available starting February 23 – March 11, 2011.

Only accredited bidders who secured bid documents and paid the bidding costs/ non-refundable fee will be allowed to participate in the bidding.

PELCO II MANAGEMENT RESERVES THE RIGHT TO REJECT ANY OR ALL BIDS, WAIVE ANY OF THE REQUIRED FORMALITY THEREIN AND ACCEPTS BIDS DEEMED MOST ADVANTAGEOUS TO THE COOPERATIVE.

(Sgd.) ANNALIZA D. MALI
PBAC Chairperson

Noted by:

(Sgd.) ARMOR V. GUEVARA
General Manager

Diocese of San Pablo
Province of Laguna
SAN PABLO CATHEDRAL CEMETERY
Barangay No. 4-A, San Pablo City

INVITATION TO BID

The Diocesan Cemetery and Columbarium Committee, through the 2011 Annual Budget, intends to apply the proceeds thereof for the following projects and services to be undertaken:

Project No.	Amt. in Php	Project Name	Description	ABC in Php	Bid Bond in Php
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Bidding Documents : [illegible]
Pre-Bid Conference : [illegible]
Deadline of Submission and Opening of Bids : [illegible]

Bidders are invited to submit their sealed bids/proposals on the above-mentioned projects/services. Bidders may inquire and secure bidding documents from the Diocesan Cemetery and Columbarium Committee Secretariat, Diocesan Pastoral Center, Rizal Avenue, San Pablo City, Laguna, upon payment of a non-refundable fee of [illegible] pesos. Bidders may also submit their proposals to the Secretariat on or before the deadline of submission. Late bids shall not be accepted.

The Diocesan Cemetery and Columbarium Committee reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any formality therein, and accept the bid most advantageous to the Diocesan Cemetery and Columbarium Committee.

(Sgd.) [illegible]
Chairman, Diocesan Cemetery and Columbarium Committee

Noted by:

(Sgd.) [illegible]
Diocesan Administrator

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Malacañang to delegate ruling on Marcos burial

By Marvin Buridalen and TJ Burgonio

PRESIDENT Aquino will assign a government official "with less personal attachment" to study both sides for the last dictator Ferdinand Marcos to be buried at Libingan ng mga Bayani.

Sen. Ferdinand Marcos Jr., the late dictator's son and namesake, said on Tuesday that his father deserved to be buried at the site, having been a war hero and the longest serving President of the country.

Less personal attachment

"Whatever I say will be biased. So I'm thinking of inhibiting myself on deciding the matter," Mr. Aquino told reporters on Malacañan Day.

He said he would "let somebody who has less personal attachment decide on it and (hopefully we'll) be deciding. Our person (his office) now."

The President's and the senator's fathers, Benigno Aquino Jr. and Ferdinand Marcos, respectively, were bitter political rivals in the late 1960s and early 1970s.

The Aquino administration in 1983 was widely blamed on Marcos and is considered by historians as the start of the end of the Marcos dictatorship.

Implications

"There are many implications of (the Dodot L. Blondi) (S)o a recognition of his being a soldier during World War II? Should it be because he was a former Commander in Chief?" the President said.

"Should it be that he was for me? (President) But of course, there will be a terror or a significant reason, especially because we are celebrating the 25th anniversary of Ninoy (next week ... But now, (then's) his mandate removed by the people? How can there be an endorsement," he added.

Glass coffin

Marcos was ousted in the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution that catapulted Mr. Aquino's mother to the presidency. Marcos died three years later in exile in Hawaii and his body was flown back in 1993 to his hometown, Batac, Ilocos Norte, where it has been displayed in a glass coffin and has become a favorite attraction.

The decision was assured of ensuring ill-gotten wealth. Under his martial law regime, countless human rights violations, torture, enforced disappearances and deaths were recorded.

Close chapter

The younger Marcos said yesterday that his family's standing with to bury their patriarch at Libingan ng mga Bayani should be seen as an attempt to "close a chapter" in the country's history and "move forward."

In fact, the senator said the burial of his father, who ruled with an iron hand for close to 20 years, should be seen as an opportunity for "unification" of the country. "This is one way of getting that process started," he said.

The senator's call came after former Armed Forces Chief of Staff Angelo Reyes was buried at Libingan ng mga Bayani. Reyes committed suicide on Feb. 4 amid charges that he received huge military payoffs.

'Inequitable treatment'

The younger Marcos said his family was serious about its standing with especially in view "an inequitable treatment" of who should be buried at Libingan ng mga Bayani.

"The issue came up again because of the death of former Secretary Reyes. And ordinary people are beginning to see why there is this inequitable treatment," he said.

Two Edsa I personalities, former President Joseph Ejercito Estrada, and Sen. Gregorio Honasan, have expressed support for the younger Marcos' call.

Resign calls rising but Merci not giving up, will appeal

From page A1

not just because the justices' 7-5 vote (with two partially sometimes with the majority and one abstaining) showed that the high court was divided on the issue.

He added that Ombudsman would stand on the strength of her arguments that (the impeachment) case should not continue because the House violated the Constitution when it heard two impeachment complaints against her.

Not unanimous

"We think, of course, that it would have been different if the vote were unanimous," said De Jesus, who speaks for the Office of the Ombudsman.

"But that is not the substantial thing why the Ombudsman is going to appeal (the ruling). The most important thing is she believes there is merit in her petition and would like the Supreme Court to take another look at her stand," he added.

Speaker Feliciano Belmonte said (Gutierrez) was assured of impartial impeachment proceedings at the House.

"The Honorable Ombudsman has nothing to fear," he said. "As our past actions show, we shall always safeguard her constitutionally guaranteed rights to the source of learning on the truth."

Belmonte said that with the high court's ruling, there are now "no obstacle for the House to proceed here where it left off."

But he also urged House members to hold further (Gutierrez's impeachment) case pending the high court's final ruling on Gutierrez's planned appeal.

Church, business stand

Calls were sounded by Bhutia (secretary Bishop Broderick Pabillo and the Makati Business Club (MBC) for the House ombudsman on justice (hatred by Jinkee Rep. Mel Tejada Jr to get on with the impeachment proceedings.

Atid Kaya Pilipino!, a group of advocates of clean government, said Gutierrez's should just resign her post instead of going through the costly proceedings that would destroy Congress' (from) legislative.

"We are happy about the decision of the Supreme Court (because) this is a way for us now to set things right," Pabillo, who chairs the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines' National Secretariat for Social Action, said over the Church-run Radio Veritas.

"We've been longing for this ... that the Ombudsman be made accountable to the nation, and one way to make her accountable is through the impeachment proceedings," the bishop said.

In a statement, the MBC said it welcomed the high court's Tuesday ruling with "great relief."

The business group urged the House committee on justice "to pursue the impeachment proceed... ings without further delay," adding that the five-month suspension of the impeachment proceedings had "allowed the Ombudsman to inflict more harm on the Filipino people" with her office's dismissal handling of the Carlos Garcia plunder case."

"For far too long, one person has stood in the way of the Filipino people's overwhelming decision to advance the fight against corruption and punish corrupt public officials. We appeal to the legislators, put an end to the incompetent and repeated subversion of justice, and take this necessary step toward rebuilding the people's trust in our justice system," the MBC said.

Stay or go?

Bishop Pabillo said the impeachment proceedings would determine whether Gutierrez had been faithful to or remiss in her obligations as Ombudsman, and whether she should be retained or replaced.

He also said that most cases of corruption in the government would be exposed once the impeachment proceedings started.

But Kaya Natin!, through its lead convenor Dewey Itoh, said it would be "most honorable for (Gutierrez) to just resign."

"It will spare her from public humiliation and it would give President Aquino leeway to choose the next Ombudsman," he said.

Itoh said there were "very strong grounds" for Gutierrez to be removed from her post.

"If you have honor and dignity, you will resign," he said, adding:

"I hope she will resign as we can all move forward. This will save the country millions and (impeachment process) and allow Congress to focus on its job."

Asked why he thought Gutierrez was clinging to her position despite a clamor for her to quit, Itoh said: "I believe she thinks she can still survive the mandamus and perhaps she's also protecting some interests."

He said Gutierrez's continuing stay as Ombudsman had been frustrating for Filipinos awaiting the resolution of major corruption cases, including the alleged $1.9-billion (P85.215 billion) scam involving fertilizer fund scam.

"Filipinos do not have a monopoly on corruption but

MERCEDEITAS GUTIERREZ

sometimes we think too lowly of ourselves. It happens in other states (that) they prosecute, punish and jail those responsible," Itoh said.

"Here, people who are corrupt get to play golf every day. People think that here, crime does pay," he said.

Affirmation of power

Speaker Belmonte hailed the Supreme Court decision that, he said, not only affirmed (the House's) exclusive power over impeachment cases and also emphasized that in this case, the charges "has stood its power jealously and fairly."

He said the extension of the case would "provide a compelling argument for the orderly and continuous exercise of (the) constitutionally powers which proximately put to conflict the great branches of our government."

House Minority Leader Edcel Lagman echoed the position that the House committee on justice should wait for the Supreme Court ruled on Gutierrez's planned appeal.

"I think it would be more prudent on the part of the committee to wait for the final resolution. The decision is not yet final, and the Ombudsman still has the right to seek reconsideration," Lagman said. Reports from Leila de Lima, Aydee R. Ux, Iloria Quintanilla and Cynthia B. Balana

Romulo on way out of DFA, being considered for 3 new posts

From page A1

EDSA, for the Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Ricardo David Jr., who is retiring next month, he would be allowed another post.

The President acknowledged Romulo's capabilities in government service. "Sec. Romulo is not a stranger to me. So, he will has great features that he can state. It's always the details that tie us up," the President said.

Mr. Aquino told reporters after addressing a command conference with the military top brass in Camp Aguinaldo that he would make an announcement this week.

"I want to make sure that when I make a pronouncement, it's already perfect instead of still subject to change," he said when asked about reports that Romulo would replace Alberto del Rosario as Foreign Secretary.

Asked if Romulo may serve in another capacity, Mr. Aquino said: "That is very possible at this time. But it's also related to whether he'd accept it or not."

In his brief, the President wants him to remain in government after the general retires from military service on March 6 when he turns 56.

"I'm still convincing General David. He's still young. He might want to take another responsibility afterward. I'm almost (sure) that I was able to convince him," Mr. Aquino said.

The President didn't address reports that del Rosario would resign from his post in the DFA.

Mr. Aquino did say that the foreign affairs portfolio was quite important, especially with recent developments abroad.

"We have a lot of things to do

ALBERTO DEL ROSARIO

ALBERTO ROMULO Outgoing and incoming

with regard to foreign affairs. For instance, isn't the latest one the one that happened in Egypt? Since we have the issue of our country... (that who were connected to death) in China," the President said.

Possible positions

Malacañang sources said the possible positions for Romulo include heading chair of the Commission on Audit, permanent representative of the country to the United Nations and head of the Development Bank of the Philippines.

Romulo served as budget secretary under the administration of then President Corazon Aquino, before winning a Senate seat in 1998.

Romulo expressed support for Mr. Aquino in the last elections despite being a member of the Arroyo administration that backed the candidacy of former Defense Secretary Gilberto Teodoro.

Mr. Aquino announced late last year that he would effect a Cabinet revamp in early 2011. He said that the revamp would involve two to three officials in the Cabinet.

Acting secretaries

There are two remaining acting secretaries in the Cabinet—Social Government Secretary Jesse Robredo and Environment Secretary Ramon Paje.

Many regard Paje to be replaced by former Bukidnon Rep. Nereus Acosta, a former chair of the House committee on the environment, when the one-year ban on defeated candidates holding appointive positions expires in the middle of the year.

Acosta, Mr. Aquino's party mate in the Liberal Party, earlier scrutinized in last year's election but lost.

Willing to serve

David said he had inherited the President that he was willing to continue to serve in government after his term.

"I told him, 'I'm still young Mr. President. If I am still of use to your government then I am very willing to serve,'" David told reporters after Wednesday's command conference in Camp Aguinaldo.

He said the President had not offered him any position and that he did not think he would be offered a Cabinet post.

But David said the President had asked him which post he preferred. "Sir, whatever vacant post there is where I may be of help and if it fits my qualifications, then I will be very willing to be in that position," David recalled his reply.

Sendoff gift

When he ends his 39 years of military service next month, the only sendoff gift, or pahinuli, he will get is his retirement benefits and "the love of the soldiers," David said.

Officials estimated David's lump sum retirement pay equivalent to three years' worth of monthly pension and other benefits, or to between P1 million and P4 million.

Whistle-blower George Rabusa claimed that Angelo Reyes got P350 million, Deputado Villanueva P120 million and Rep. Gerardo P80 million as sendoff gifts when they retired as AFP chiefs of staff.

Next chief of staff

Mr. Aquino has a list of generals from which he would choose the next AFP chief of staff.

"But I will make the announcement (on David's successor) at the proper time and this is not the time yet," the President said.

David said all 11 three-star generals and two two-star generals had been unanimously the President as candidates for the next chief of staff.

The frontrunner generals and vice admirals include AFP Vice Chief of Staff Jaime Bautista Dhan, Army chief Arturo Orio and Air Force chief Oscar Rabusa.

Also interviewed were the area commanders—Guadencio Pangilinan of Northern Luzon Command, Rolando Dolabali of Eastern Mindanao Command, Rolando Villanueva of Central Command, Juanchio Sabban of Western Command and Raymundo Ferrer of Western Mindanao Command.

Also on the list were AFP Inspector General Hilario Canarom and Philippine Military Academy superintendent Leonardo Calderon.

The two major generals considered as candidates are Josue Dellosa, commander of the Army's 2nd Infantry Division, and Rustomir Bonifacio, the deputy chief of staff for operations.

In light of the corruption charges, David said he was open to the freezing of Internal Revenue's idea of conducting a lifestyle check on military officials.

"I think there is really a need for government officials holding high positions, particularly those who make decisions in the disbursement of funds, to have a lifestyle check. If there should be a lifestyle check, so be it. I have nothing to hide," he said.

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House allots funds for controversial RH bill in 2012

By Cynthia D. Balana

THE 162B,000 appropriation committee yesterday approved the allocation of funds for the consolidated reproductive health bill starting in 2012, according to Minority Leader Edcel Lagman.

In a press conference, Lagman said no money was appropriated for the initial implementation of the bill as the amounts allotted in the current budget for reproductive health and family planning in the Department of Health and Population Commission would be tapped.

Lagman said he expected pro-life advocates in the House to vigorously oppose the measure since it was submitted for plenary discussion.

But he said "the inexcusable progression to enactment of the reproductive health bill" was assured.

The current substitute bill is a consolidation of House bills Nos. 96, 101, 533, 1160 and 3387 as previously approved by the population and family relations committee.

Once the bill becomes law, appropriations for the program in the national budget, starting in 2012, could run up to P3 billion.

Lagman expressed confidence that the bill, which would need the approval of a simple majority of the House quorum, would be approved.

"We do not only have the authority of numbers, we also have the superiority of arguments," he said.

But Manila Rep. Amado Bagatsing, a prolife congressman, has promised a passionate debate and stiff opposition to the bill once it is submitted for floor debate.

Question of faith

"Seriously as a Catholic, I think this is a direct affront on the 4% percent of our population who are Catholics. This is a question of faith," Bagatsing said.

He did not believe that the bill was a priority issue which was why it was not among the priority measures submitted to Congress by Malacañang.

"We have other pressing issues to attend to. The Philippines can't afford another bill. Anyway it's starting already in local government units which have budgets for this, so why do we have to put money for that?" Bagatsing asked.

He claimed that manpowers, more organizations, private pharmaceutical companies and international organizations had put up money for the program under the pretext of the bill.

Bagatsing stressed that the money intended for the implementation of the bill should be used for other social services like health and the construction of school buildings.

He suggested that representatives pushing for the passage of the bill should use their pork barrel to finance its implementation.

Up to the married couples

Bagatsing maintained that family planning should be best left to married couples.

"The long and short of it is these things are catering to young and have-trained for so long on why does Congress have to give its imprimatur? Why do we have to put penal sanctions? We leave it to the couple," he said.

He said that value is needed instead is to increase the country's productivity to create more jobs, and to turn its huge population from a liability into an asset.

Bagatsing is counsel pushing for the passage of his senatorial town bill. Under his bill, abortionists cannot be bought over the counters without a doctor's prescription.

The reproductive health bill will now go back to the committee on population and family relations for approval and for the committee report to finalize it is submitted to the committee on rules which would then calendar it for plenary discussions.

MARIAN MISSION Various Marian and prolife groups led by Mary's Army to Save Souls rodeo beats with images of the Virgin Mary and other prayers in opposite the passage of the reproductive health bill in Congress during a florial procession in Subic Bay on Sunday. It also marked the homing of Quezon's no. 4th hour prayer vigil of Marian devotees, in preparation for the 25th anniversary of the 1986 Edsa People Power Revolution.

Pacquiao meets the man: 'He's so tall'

From page A1

lasting pose, in the Oval Office, Secretariat.

Grocery bags

Obama gave Pacquiao three grocery bags full of light blue M&M's with the presidential seal, along with a medallion with the seal, and said he was hoping to someday visit the Philippines.

Pacquiao invited President Obama to his fight against American Shane Mosley on May 7 at MGM Grand in Las Vegas, Time-Mosley said.

But Obama said he would be busy, although he promised to watch on television.

"Manny said it was very impressive being in the Oval Office, seeing it first hand. He said it was a great honor to meet the president of the United States," Hocsiong said, pointing to Joseph. "He also told the president to a very tall man."

P-Noy's take

In Manila, President Aquino said he was glad that Pacquiao and Obama met.

Asked what he thought of the meeting between Pacquiao and Obama, Mr. Aquino said: "We have an outstanding athlete worthy of being talked to by one of the most powerful men of the world.

"So there is a recognition that here in the Philippines we also have talented and world-wide individuals," he told reporters. "So I'd like to emphasize that."

Mr. Aquino met with Obama during his visit to the United States last year.

Reid's reelection

Before he visited the White House, Pacquiao roamed the hallwell of the Capitol in the guest of Reid, a Democrat from Nevada and a former boxer whose reelection was no doubt helped by Pacquiao's campaign appearances.

After Reid and Pacquiao exchanged national flags, Reid was asked how long he would last in his quest if the two exchanged punches. "About five seconds," Reid said.

Pacquiao arrived in Washington by train on Tuesday wrapping up a press tour promoting his next fight that began in Los Angeles and included stops in Las Vegas and New York.

The last that he has arrived on the scene has been good for boxing, making plenty of high-profile fans and bringing some mainstream attention to a sport that has been seemingly dying for decades.

Enthusiastic following

"You can become a great athlete and still be a good person," Reid said.

Reid felt compelled to set up Pacquiao's meeting with Obama because of the Filipino boxer's enthusiastic following in the United States.

Hundreds of fans turned out for public appearances in Los Angeles, California, and New York City waving flags and making room to see him.

"I try not to bother the president," Reid said. "But I bothered him on this occasion."

Pacquiao's every move was shadowed as he walked onto the Capitol grounds with his aide. Pronounce Bob Brown said it was reminiscent of the heyday of Muhammad Ali, whom he also presented.

"He comes at a very fortunate time," Brown said. "Everybody can bring boxing back in the mainstream. ... It's Manny Pacquiao." Reports from AP and Olivia G. Auzenbaugh

AT EGOROS, HE'S OUT!!! Senator Boy and eight-division world boxing champion Manny Pacquiao speaks under a portrait of the first president of the United States George Washington at Capitol Hill in Washington on Tuesday. AP

'Very unusual case': SC reverses ruling for 4th time

From page A1

said.

"I have yet to hear of another time that has gone this way," he said.

Marquez said the petition originally filed by the League of Cities of the Philippines (LCP) opposing the so-called shylock laws could be considered "yes-doc case," or anything only in a particular case or occasion and not to be used as precedent in future cases.

"Hopefully this will be the last of this case. But then again, we have another motion for reconsideration being filed by the losing party in last Tuesday's ruling," he said.

14 cashing laws

In a vote of 7-6 with two abstentions, the high court held that the 14 cashing laws passed by the House of Representatives did not violate any provision of the Constitution and Republic Act No. 9009 (the Local Government Code).

The contraceptive allowed by the high court were converted to cities were Bacolod, Lapu-Lapu, Naga, Iloilo and Cebu in Cebu; Dagupan and Bontoc in Samar; Tandag, Surigao del Sur; Lucena, Batdas, Tayabas, Quezon, Tabuk, Kalinga, Bayugan, Bayugan del Sur; Baler, Nueva Ecija; and Mati, Davao Oriental.

The ordinances declared constitutional the city-hood laws of Borbongan, Negros Oriental; Catadman, Agusan del Norte; and El Salvador, Misamis Oriental.

In its original petition, the LCP argued that the city-hood laws infringed on the stipulation of RA 9009 that a town or municipality applying to become a city should have a minimum annual earnings of P100 million.

The LCP argued that the "wholesale conversion" of municipalities into cities would reduce the Internal Revenue Allotment of existing cities because there would be more cities sharing the same amount.

Petitioned by both members of Congress, the city-hood laws covered the minimum requirement to P50 million.

Change of vote

The latest resolution of the high court was written by Associate Justice Lucas Bersamin, with Chief Justice Renato Corona and Associate Justices Presbitero Velasco Jr., Teresita Leonardo-De Castro, Roberto Abad, Jose Perez and Jose Mendoza concurring.

Those who dissented were Senior Associate Justice Antonio Carpio and Associate Justices Martin Villarama Jr., Ma. Lourdes Sereno, Arturo Brion and Bienvenido Reyes.

Associate Justices Marvic Leonen and Estela Perlas-Bernabe did not vote on the issue.

Mendoza had earlier supported the LCP's contention that the city-hood laws were unconstitutional.

"I would like to think that [Associate] change of vote] was based on the earlier dissent of Justice Brion," Marquez said.

Yes and no

In 2007, the 16 municipalities were converted to cities.

In its original ruling on the LCP petition issued on Nov. 18, 2008, the high court voted 5-5 declaring the city-hood laws unlawful.

On April 26, 2009, the high court upheld its November 2008 ruling with a split vote of 8-6, all the same time denying a second motion for reconsideration filed by the towns that had their city status.

On Dec. 22, 2009, the high court declared a deadlocked vote did not nullified the majority of its members and thus endorsed the validity of the city-hood laws that converted the 16 towns to cities.

It once again reversed itself on Aug. 24, 2010. Voting 7-6 with two abstentions, the high court rescinded its 2009 decisions, stripping the 16 cities of their city status. With a report from Elmer Victoria, Inquirer Research

SC not 'political court,' high court tells critics

By Marlon Ramos

CRITICS of the Supreme Court should "move on" and stop thinking that it is a "political court," its spokesperson said administration said yesterday.

Speaking at a news conference, Midas Marquez disassured allegations that the justices were merely saving face when they ruled on Tuesday against the petition of Undersecretary Leonardo Quisumbing for a stay to the impeachment proceedings against her in the House of Representatives.

"The court has been here for more than a hundred years and we have seen such decisions. No justice, even the chief justice, is bigger than the Supreme Court," Marquez said.

Chief justices come and go

"The Chief Justices come and go, but the court will have its story... Perhaps it's time to move on and stop thinking that this is a political court," he said.

Marquez said that instead of suspecting the motives behind the high court's decisions, the people should give it "a chance to decide on its own on the merits of the cases filed."

He again vehemently denied accusations that the high court's rulings on certain cases had been influenced by former President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, who appointed all but one of the 15 incumbent justices.

"If this is an Arroyo court, then it should have voted 14-1 in favor of the Ombudsman," Marquez said to reference to Gutierrez, a known Arroyo ally.

"The ruling alone will tell you that the court is equally divided, that the court is not playing politics. Otherwise, it should have decided liquid. cut's you vote," he said.

Marquez also reasoned that the ruling of the House committee on justice to immediately resume hearing the impeachment complaints against Gutierrez "might be violative of the processes of the court."

Luisita-Canlubang Senior feud kicks off PAL Interclub

By Nuzeng B. Candila

CAGAYAN DE ORO—Luisita and Canlubang begin another heated duel as hostilities open the 64th edition of the Philippine Airlines Interclub going in two venues today.

The Lakeshore will try to win for the second straight year at the expense of the Hapee Toothie, who will try to erase the stigma of a final round meltdown in Negros last year and prevail for the third time in four years.

Patrick Gaston, Iggy Clavecilla and PSC-Rank Rookie Garcia will again carry the fight for the Luisitans, who had a strengthened air this season until Canlubang became a force in the last so years with the graduation of key players from the Meet's ranks.

Tommy Manotoc is convinced among the Canlubang Meet's aces who started his brilliance in the 55-and-over division, emerging over Luisita's Archibald Acenjo/Gonzaga the Laguna squad is in store three more titles.

"It will go down to the final day," said Gaston, who bemoaned his squad's lack of tournament play since last year at Masapeta. "If there's any team that's going to give us the end, it's going to be us.

"Otherwise if you look at the talent level of both teams, it's pretty even," added Gaston, the Philippine amateur champion 10 years ago at Villamor Air Base. They have the edge in terms of tournament experience."

Dave Hernandez, a PAVEI Amateur veteran, former pro Sally Ching and Canlubang duist Luigi Tala will be the other stalwarts of the Batons in the four-ways. Bow-to-stern event spread over four rounds.

Del Monte in Manolo Bethel, Habitacon, and Pueblo de Oro Inter will be the other of the tournament, with both teams sounding different characters.

Pueblo de Oro's fairways and greens have been hardened by rains and been the past few days, while Del Monte will play longer because of rain-softened fairways and receptive greens.

"The battle would well be won in Del Monte," Manotoc said. After practice Wednesday afternoon at Pueblo de Oro. "Everyone can go low (in Pueblo), while I think it will be a struggle for the field in Del Monte because that course doesn't necessarily reward power."

At the end of fairsies' play on Sunday, the tournament will take a two-day break before Men's action outside where Canlubang will be seeking to win for an unprecedented sixth straight year.

This year's competition is backed by platinum sponsors Boysig, Airbus, Radio Mindanao Network, Business Mirror and Interaction Broadcast Media (DWWW); ginger sponsors and Bright Asia, 3-in-1 Cosmetic Oil Arbitrio and Throwing the Odors.

More detailed information on the tournament is available on the dedicated PAL Interclub webpage at www.philippineairlines.com/events/events.jsp.

Azkals need ₱31M for 2011 sked

By Cedrik F. Tupas

KEEPING THE Azkals on their feet won't come cheap.

To finish the rest of its campaign for 2011, the Philippine national football team will need P31 million, which will also cover expenses for the Under-23 squad's participation in the Southeast Asian Games in Indonesia.

Philippine Football Federation president Mariano "Nonong" Araneta said the amount will also take care of the Azkals' training camps, even as well as the campaigns in the AFC Challenge Cup and the World Cup qualifying.

Araneta admitted that the PFF alone does not have the resources to fund the team, and said they are banking on the help of sponsors and international federations.

"If we can get some sponsors and other federations can help us with training camps, we can bring the costs down," Araneta said.

The PFF is finalizing a deal with the German Football Association to help pay for the services of coach Hans Michael Weiss and is working help from the football associations of Japan, Bahrain, Jordan and Thailand.

The Azkals received $150,000 (Rp1.4 billion) as part of their share in the gate receipts during their AFF Suzuki Cup semifinal matchup against Indonesia this last year.

The Azkals have played only one game so far this year, beating Mongolia, 2-1, in the first leg of their AFC Challenge Cup qualifying match in Sanford City.

They will need P4 million for the second leg in Ulan Bator, with the AFC mandated to give just $20,000 (P860,000) for the trip.

Araneta has already sent a request to the Japan Football Association to allow the Azkals to use the JFA facility in Fukushima from March 8 to 22 to help them acclimatize to the sub-zero conditions in Mongolia.

POWERHOUSE while big Mike Silungan (right) and the University of the Philippines Maroons to the D League.

14 squads join D-League

Team departures thwart scheduled PBL revival

By Jane Navarro and Jasmine W. Payo

FOURTEEN TEAMS have signed up for the inaugural Philippine Basketball Association D-League, including four who were supposed to play the revival of the aborted Philippine Basketball League.

"At least for the time being, the PBL cannot be revived," said a source, who has worked with the former premier amateur league in the country and was engaged to play a key role in the league's revival.

The four PBL teams that jumped ship were Air21-Nutrix, Jam TGA, Cebu's Energy Drink/ABL Phoenix and Cafe Fenomeno.

"We're surprised with the development," said Nolan Bernardino, who was installed as commissioner of the now PBL by the member teams.

"We have yet to receive an official statement from the PBL teams," added the son of the late and beloved PBA commissioner Jun Bernardino, who is also the director of Sports Vision, the outfit tapped by the PBL team owners to manage the league's day-to-day operations.

Teams that joined the PBA squads like Perpetual Help University of the Philippines, Mapúa and Metro Pacific will lend the D-League spot that will include Black Water, Burger Boy, City of Antipolo, Manila/Pasig/Mandaluyong, Pacific Pipes, QC Gilmans, Cebuana Lhuillier and Pampa Jones.

"It's a go," said PBA commissioner Chito Salud of the D-League. "A total of 14 teams have confirmed to be part of our latest endeavor."

Statistics in the PBDL, designed to become the farm league of the PBA, begins on March 12 at the PASAI Plying 'n' Arena in Pasig.

"We are happy with the turnout," said Salud. "We are getting ready for the schedules and preparing for the opening."

Salud said they would sit down with the teams on Monday and go through the details of their participation.

Powerade OIC owned by Coca-Cola Bottlers Phils. Inc., said Source the GP Fighting Warriors and their new head coach Ricky Dandan.

FLIT Smart big boss Manny V. Pangilinan, who owns Meycauayan and Olivera Purefoods Tender, is at the helm of the Talk 'N Text and likewise franchises on the per-league.

The PBL was supposed to feature six teams, but only five teams confirmed their participation until the last minute before the season opener.

The other squad was Barobord, the last PBL champion before the league folded up last year.

"We have an agreement with [the team owners] that for us to run and operate the PBL, there should be six teams," stressed Bernardino. "Anything less than six won't push through. It will be a no-go for us because we don't see it viable if it's less than six teams."

Where it ends long for a sixth team to commit, as league source said, the PBL squads entered landing the D. League's ways.

"What's important is the team owners' love, we'll request it," said Bernardino when asked of the source's statement. "Maybe it's a business decision on their end."

Hope Christian stuns Xavier, nears title

HOPE CHRISTIAN High School finally snapped three-time defending champion Xavier School's historic winning streak with a 93-82 victory Tuesday morning within a win of ruling the Fresgo-Ateneo Manila Thing Line Basketball Association at the Ateneo Sal Shah College gym.

Playing in best game on last, Hope Christian drew firepower from Emil Villar, Ring Bonnevelas, Jeremy Caetrick and Jeremy Pedroza to inch closer toward its first title in 18 years.

Caetrick and Bolivar produced 22 and 21 points, respectively, while Villar made the biggest play, a putback at crunch time that gave Hope Christian an 82-79 lead.

Villar's basket made the rising out of the Goldon Stallions, where 22-point winning run—the longest in league history—finally came to an end.

Xavier star Jerem Teng had his usual numbers—45 points, 16 rebounds and three steals—but only Daniel Ong (17 points) and Kyler Lee (10 points) provided support in the series Added to Disunity or Destiny.

Hope Christian can climb the crown in Game 2 on Friday also at 6 p.m. Hope Christian's titles came in 1985, 1988 and 1991.

Bonnevelas emerged as the Finnga Player of the Game after scoring 17 points on a 7-of-9 shooting from the field aside from adding 21 boards. Villar had 11 points and 15 boards.

The MVP/MA is being backed by PCBO, Dasco Paints, Wilcon, Omron, Puma, Sera C, Rantin, PG Pain, Molten, Healthy Options, Bros & Wear Burlington, MSC Company, Converse, Gold's Gym and Absolute.

IN BRIEF/PH. Powerade Tigers governor in the PBA board Lord VP for public affairs and corporate affairs of Coca-Cola Philippines counsel, second from left), and PSA president Rodolfo Pelonidez of the Philippine Sports with a trophy after the PSA naming the two-stage giant the premiere sponsor for 2011 PSA Awards Night. Witnessing the signing are PSA board of governors (seated, from left) Lee Tacujan of Philippine Sun; Jeremy Carter of Philippine Star; and (standing, from left), Gerry Baraan of People's Journal, Nestor Mallari of Manila Bulletin of Today, Mario Cardona of Tribune, and PSA sports editor Jun Antonio.

LETTRAY'S Cocoa Sy sports sharpens up her shotmaking at the Hermosa Sports on West Avenue, Quezon City.

NCBL: Lyceum strikes back

LYCEUM REBOUNDED from an early defeat by downing University of Manila and Philippine Maritime Institute to virtually assure itself of a spot in the next round of the Instructional Collegiate Billiards League also known as the League Filmcenter round held at the San Hayer Billiards Center in Quezon City.

Powered by Samuel Dugos, the Pirates thrashed UM, 3-0, before topping PMI, 2-1, to gain fourth spot with 68 points.

With two playdates remaining, St. Clare College continued to set the pace after a 2-1 triumph over Lyceum and a 3-0 triumph of National University parlayed up its record to 77 points.

Laylo half a point behind lead

MEXICO—Filipino Grandmaster Eric Wester Laylo drew with Armenian GM Davit Arabidze in their eighth-and-penultimate round encounter but dropped out of the lead in the 2011 Aeroflot Open Group B chess championships at the Ugra Golden Girls on Tuesday.

Laylo clinched a draw with black against Radjabov (Elo 2674) to boost his total to 6.6 points entering his final round match against Russian GM Alexei Goreliov of Russia on Wednesday.

Laylo, Radjabov, Gazobov and Russian Pole Mateusz Bagra halfsquaretime are tied 6 apiece behind GM Vepkhvia Rakhapiani of Armenia and Nikolai Kabanov of Russia.

Rakhapiani outsmited top junior coach Alan Vladimir Bobrov of Russia, while Kabanov crushed GM Wen Ding of China to share the lead with Laylo's group.

International Master Richard Nelson downed Russian GM Mikhail Ulibin of Russia to finish at 5.5 points.

The rest of the Filipino players finished out of contention.

Gomez, who held the solo lead after the fifth round, absorbed his third straight setback this time at the hands of Armenian GM David Movsesian, and retreated to 4.5 points.

IM Oliver Barbosa also had 4.5 points after a draw with Russian GM Evgeni Shaposhnikov while IM Oliver Dimalibot stayed at 3.5 points. Following another loss to Russian GM Artyom Timofeev.

Coca-Cola joins PSA in honoring athletes

UNDERSCORING its continuing support to support sports, Coca-Cola Philippines has joined forces with the Philippine Sportswriters Association in paying tribute to the country's top athletes and sportsmen in the year 2010.

The leading beverage company is a corporate backer of sports in the country and through its Powerade sub-brand will again work with the PSA as major presenters of the PSA Annual Awards Night on March 5 at the Manila Hotel.

It will mark the second straight year that Coca-Cola has agreed to back the PSA's awards gala.

Jill Sayden, the Powerade corporate secretary in the Philippine Basketball Association (PBA) board and VP for public affairs and communications of Coca-Cola Philippines, and PSA president Rodolfo Pelonidez of the Inquirer signed a Memorandum of Agreement formalizing the partnership at the Makati Shangri-La hotel recently.

"Coca-Cola shares the commitment and the passion of the Philippine Sportswriters Association (PSA) in pushing for the advancement of sports in the country," said Sayden.

"We are very honored and very excited about our partnership and we believe that together we can help inspire a generation of Filipinos, especially in promoting the healthy and active lifestyle through sports and allied activities among our fellow Filipinos."

PSA officials led by Melendres welcomed Coca-Cola's support.

"Coca-Cola's continuing support to the PSA's annual tribute is one big athlete shows the company's deep commitment to Philippine sports," said Melendres.

"We are grateful that Coca-Cola, as sponsors of some of the world's greatest sporting events, has again partnered with the country's sportswriters in this noble cause."

Cedrik F. Tupas

Editor Teddyboy B. Molavales
Assistant Editor Francis T. J. Chiaw

SPORTS

'Big 3' fires Heat, torches Pacers

INDIANAPOLIS—Miami's "Big Three" combined to score 99 points and lead the Heat to a 116-103 victory over the Indiana Pacers on Thursday.

The Heat, led by Dwyane Wade, LeBron James and Chris Bosh, threatened to run away with the game early but needed a fourth-quarter rally after going up a 21-point first quarter lead.

"We're very good going down the stretch in winning time," said Heat coach Erik Spoelstra. "That said, we need to push for a cleaner, penalty-level execution."

Wade scored 32 of his 41 points in the first quarter to help build a 41-19 lead, while James scored 18 of his 27 points in the fourth quarter and Chris Bosh added 22 points.

The Pacers, however, put together two runs in the second quarter to outscore the Heat 55-17 and pull within four points at halftime.

They then managed to build a five-point lead during the third quarter, but faded down the stretch and made just one field goal over the final 4:30.

Jeff Green led the Pacers with 31 points while Tyler Hansbrough scored 16 and Paul George scored 14 off the bench. The Pacers bench players outscored the starters 53-50 and were instrumental in the second-quarter comeback scoring 26 points.

"Games like these in our opinion are every game where the other team makes us one of what we're trying to do," said James. "Yesterday in Boston, it was the third quarter. Tonight, it was the second quarter. When we did in the fourth quarter is what we do. We just raised it to more consistent."

In Oklahoma City, Dampier Cook scored 28 points and Russell Westbrook added 14 points and 11 assists as the Thunder set the team's season high for points in a 126-94 rout of the Sacramento Kings.

Oklahoma City scored 68 points in the first half, a season high for a half.

DWYANE Wade drives his way to 41 points for the Heat. AFP

Doubtit set for long haul with PH five

By Jane Navarro

MANILA DOUBT is a long-term investment for the future Gilas Pilipinas basketball program.

Head Gilas head coach Ildefo Tereraya yesterday said the 6-foot-10 American would play for the national five at least two more years after the Gilas' run for an Olympic berth in the Fiba Asia Championship in September.

Based with height problems in the past, Tereraya said recruiting national team players to compete for Doubtit would be of an efficient and reliable inside player accustomed to the international game since Doubtit secures his Filipino citizenship.

Doubtit's application for naturalization is now on President Aquino's desk, awaiting for the signature that will allow the former LA Lakers draftee to donate a Philippine passport and be eligible for the national team.

"It's great for Philippine basketball," said Tereraya. "The national team will be very competitive with a big player like Marcus for the next four to five years."

7-11 riders lead Bike King field

THE TEETH 7-11 riders lead the 71 bikers racing for honors in the first leg of the 2011 Bike King Cycling Classic this Saturday at the Subic Bay Freeport grounds in Zambales.

Leading American triad and Davis Salen is clubs are also tabbed as favorites in the non-stop race covering the 10 individual categories 3 and 4 in the men's division and the 30-4 points race in the women's side.

The race, using the MMBBA Lapu Pro Timing, tees off at 6a.m. at the Subic Bay Athletic Village.

Valdez Gab, Alcedo Power, Trigona Kinetic Heritage Park, Bay's Bike Zone, SVTC Jet, Motors, ADACA and Mountain also fielded teams in the three-leg event along with Norman Sotimula, Pan Cargo, Excel SDS, Mountain, Isuzu, TKO, Star Dolce Bike Mart, Mileage Bicycle Station, Primera Pro Land Bike King.

Indonesia SEA Games buildup officially gets going

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES' hometown Asian Games campaign officially got going yesterday.

The SEA Games Task force huddled down to work with the heads of the cluster groups, who will supervise the training of athletes, shooting among themselves the 39 sports on top in the biennial games in Indonesia.

Philippine Olympic Committee first vice president and former amateur boxing chief Manny Lopez has been assigned to boxing, badminton, billiards, rowing, sailing, dragonboat, water skiing, fencing, canoeing and weightlifting.

Judo veteran head Jeff Tamayo will oversee the running of aspirants in taekwondo, kurash, judo, pencak silat, shooting, wushu, wall climbing and sepak takraw.

Philippine Sports Commissioner Mikee Thomson will take care of basketball, baseball, bowling, football, futsal, golf, petanque, volleyball, athletics and chess.

Assigned to swimming chief and POC deputy secretary general Mark Joseph are diving, swimming, synchronized swimming, water polo, open water swimming, tie swimming, archery, equestrian, gymnastics, softball and table tennis.

SEA Games chief of mission and POC commissioner Chito Loyzaga earlier said they will not set any criteria nor limit the number of members of Team Philippines.

The controversial cycling body will be under POC president Jose "Peping" Cojuangco, who is expected to still be a certified team from among the top bets of the two-wearing harness in the sport.

Aplus METRO

Work on 35 buildings halted

By Tina G. Saroso

romantic getaway? simple lang.

More cash. No worries.

PSBank Flexi PRIME REMIX

Simple lang. Maasahan.

BASED ON TIP FROM TRIKE DRIVER

Cainta massacre suspect arrested

By Gerald Gene R. Quendangen, Inquirer Southern Luzon, and Nitz Calleja

A TIP from a tricycle driver led the police to fortune-to "Junjun" Acibar Jr., the suspect in the massacre of a couple and their two children in Cainta, Rizal.

Junjun was arrested on Tuesday morning in a lodging house in Boac, Marinduque, two days after he stabbed dead his uncle, senator Arthur Sr.; his wife, Elizabeth; and their children, Freyzie, 18 and Amado Jr., 14.

The day before the suspect's arrest, a tricycle driver filed a complaint with SPO2 Rodante Landa, investigation officer of the Boac Municipal Police Office, about a man who did not pay the fare of P50.

According to the driver, the man flagged his tricycle down in Boac and asked him to take him to Buyo, a village some three kilometers away.

He added that when they got to their destination, the man paid him P500.

Since the driver did not have enough money for change, he said he asked the man to have the P500 broken down into smaller bills at a nearby convenient store.

However, the man did not return.

On Tuesday morning, the tricycle driver returned to the Boac police with more information.

According to the driver, he was watching a news report when the picture of the man who had failed to pay the tricycle fare was flashed on the screen.

In the report, he was identified as the suspect in the Cainta massacre.

Given the new information, Boac police director, Chief Insp. Gilmore Manguera, dispatched

CAMEN ADI

FORTUNATO "Junjun" Acibar Jr. answers questions from reporters from inside the Cainta jail following his arrest on Tuesday in Boac, Marinduque.

INVESTIGATORS examine what remains of a Nissan Urvan which figured in a head-on collision with a passenger bus in Quezon City.

2 killed, 7 hurt in QC accident

By Nancy C. Carvajal

A COUPLE were pinned to death when a speeding air-conditioned bus collided head-on with their van on Regalado Avenue in Barangay Quirino, Quezon City, after midnight yesterday.

Edgar and Maricelina Cabrera, residents of Barangay Molino in Bacoor, Cavite, were taken to Far Eastern University Hospital where they were pronounced dead on arrival.

SPO2 Felix Bautista of the Quezon City Police District's Traffic Enforcement Group said that seven bus passengers were also taken to the hospital but the injuries they suffered as a result of the collision.

They were identified as Elgen Ramirez, Cielo Custodio, Lemuel Tegado, Rosaly Demerao, Rene Perez, Ferdinand Arellano and his wife Belinda.

According to Bautista, the driver of the Lucky Seven Jayron Bus Line (TEL 913) escaped after the accident although the conductor, Jeffrey Francia, remained at the scene.

He said that based on the accounts given by some of the bus passengers, the driver was driving very fast when the accident occurred.

The passengers told investigators that the bus had tried to overtake a vehicle in front of it but it hit the victim's Nissan Urvan head-on.

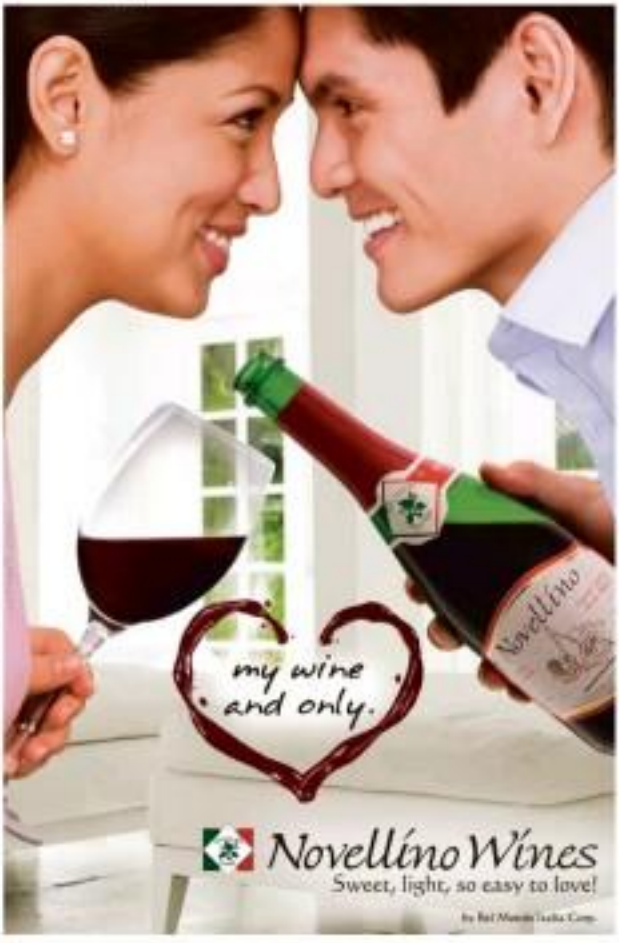
Bautista said they would charge the bus driver with reckless imprudence resulting in multiple homicide, multiple physical injuries and damage to property.

He added that he had already asked the bus company to surrender the driver who had yet to be identified.

DID YOU KNOW

QUEZON City had the highest reported number of road accidents in 2010 with 25,000 accidents resulting in 148 deaths, according to statistics of the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority.

Schalk Visconde, Inquirer Research



MINOR TRAIN MISHAP
Workers repair the railroad tracks at the Pasay Road station in Barangay Pio del Pilar, Makati City, after a train of the Philippine National Railways was derailed. No one among the passengers was hurt.

Cop kills man who took kin, claims self-defense

By Jaymee T. Gamil

A MAN wanted for abducting a 13-year-old girl and running her into a new love nest was shot dead yesterday morning by the victim's kin who turned out to be a policeman.

PO2 Angelo Loreto Baron, the girl's uncle, caught up with Junel Abutido, 22, at an inn in Sta. Cruz, Manila, according to Manila Police District (MPD) Station 3 commander Supt. James Mills.

Baron is assigned to the MPD Headquarters Support Unit.

Abutido said the policeman did not have an arrest warrant when he went to Andalusia Inn on A. Mendoza Street where Abutido was reported to be staying.

He added, however, that Baron was on a legitimate follow-up operation to others he confronted Abutido.

Based on a spot report sent to the MPD homicide section, the police team went to the room as Abutido—at 7 a.m. yesterday, just hours after his niece was recovered safely from her clutches.

The policeman said he asked Abutido to "surrender peacefully" and then tried to put hand cuffs on him.

Mumbo, however, resisted and lunged at him with a knife, wounding him in the left arm.

Baron drawned his shot pistol, de cease in the body to self-defense. He said he asked the staff of the inn to help him bring Abutido to Jose Reyes Memorial Medical Center.

Abutido died at 2:30 a.m. while Baron surrendered himself and his firearm to his colleagues.

He was subsequently placed under the custody of the MPD homicide section.

Case investigator PO1 Junico Lagunzad said the policeman's service was reported missing on Feb. 9.

On Feb. 15, a neighbor of the girl's parents told them that the victim had been spotted reportedly with a woman at Plaza Moriga in Mechanic, Tondo.

A rescue operation was conducted at 9 p.m. on the same day. The girl's companions immediately escaped but she identified them as Abutido and his live-in partner Rose Maggie.

Lagunza said the victim told the police that the couple had offered her to different men before and that they had even forced her to take drugs.

The girl's claim was later confirmed by Magro who was arrested by the police.

Caloocan couples try to set world record

By Kristine Felicia Manguiat

TWO thousand couples gathered in Caloocan City on Valentine's Day in an attempt to break the Guinness world record set by India for the biggest mass wedding ever officiated.

Dioknita Park in Tala was already filled to capacity with men and women dressed in the traditional wear before the official start of the program at 1 p.m. They were eager to take their vows before city officials and hundreds of strangers who had come to witness the once-in-a-lifetime event.

"I wanted to see how people can be married under these circumstances. This is not an ordinary wedding ceremony," said Lolita Pendencia, a widow.

The yearly event was organized by the city government for low-income couples, many of whom cannot afford lavish wedding.

Marriage documents were signed by newlyweds, which are usually paid for, were free for this year's participants.

The cost of the processing of documents—on the other hand—is usually one of the obstacles for the local government.

"The purpose of this event is to legalize the union of partners who have yet to wed. We do this yearly. We haven't got much to shell out a centavo," Mayor Recto Echiverri said.

With the civil rites, the city government had also hoped to beat the record so far held by India for the biggest mass wedding in the world. On Feb. 2, the union of at least 3,200 couples was legitimized in a mass wedding presided by Chief Ministers Dubbing Chavan, spiritual guru Sri Sri Ravishe and Bollywood actor Vivek Oberoi in Maharashtra.

By 3 p.m. yesterday, 1,600 couples had been included on their public information officer Alvin Feliciano's official list of participants. By 5 p.m., 200 more had been added to the number, leading to a total of 1,800 witnessed couples.

Although the official tally was 1,200 short of India's registered figure, the local government still plans to submit an entry to Guinness World Records to see if it could "come second" to India in the participants' book, Feliciano said.

"We are optimistic that the entry will yield satisfactory results," he added.

The area, where public events in the city are usually held, resembled the interior of a church. An aisle gave the blooming brides room that enough room to savor the walk minutes prior to their official exchange of vows with their long-time partners. However, a primary attraction in any wedding ceremony dominated the scene.

"We wanted to make the arrangements as realistic as possible for those who would be tied on Valentine's Day," Feliciano said.

Standing as the primary sponsors for the couples were Echiverri, his wife Marlene, and son Councilor Oli.

The program lasted for at least two hours, with messages from city officials preceding the brief vows presided by the mayor. Later, they lighted candles that had been ritually distributed to the couples.

"We included this part in the newlyweds' feel that they are really tying the knot," Feliciano said.

At one point the oldest registered couple, Wenifredo Guevarra, 66, and Laura Segovia, 71, went on stage for a taste of the wedding cake that organizers had prepared for the occasion.

The youngest pair to tie the knot were 22-year-old Bonnie Bragat and Ray Ann Llanos, 18.

TERESA Gana and Herman Tijano celebrate after making their union official.

TALES OF THE CITY

Fire destroys 20 houses in Pasig

By Nika Calleja

AN HOUR-LONG fire struck a neighborhood in Pasig City yesterday, leaving dozens of families homeless and destroying 20 makeshift houses.

The fire started at around 8:45 a.m. in the house of Israelita Lambacho which was located in a narrow alley near G. Sumulong Extension in Barangay Bagong Ilog, fire investigator PO2 Ernesto Ignacio said.

It was believed to have been caused by an unattended stove.

A strong wind fanned the flames which spread to nearby houses within a few minutes. The fire reached the fifth alarm before it was put out at 9:40 a.m.

No deaths

None of the residents was reported killed. Four residents, however, complained of smoke inhalation and were quickly given first aid, San Agustin said.

The fire destroyed around 20 homes which were made mostly of light materials, leaving around 60 families homeless.

San Agustin said they were still looking into the cause of the fire although there was a suspicion among residents that it started from a stove in Lambacho's house which had been left unattended.

Local officials, meanwhile, put up a temporary shelter for the affected families in a covered gym inside the barangay.

Bury FM at Libingan ng mga Bayani

A FEW days from now, the country will observe the 25th anniversary of the fake 1 revolt that unseated the dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Marcos died in exile in Hawaii.

His remains were brought to his ancestral home in Ilocos Norte.

It's high time the present leadership follows Cory Aquino's lead and let the place where he had wished to be interred, the Libingan ng mga Bayani.

No matter the bad things Marcos supposedly did during the latter part of his life, the fact remains that he was a war hero.

If not for Cory's magnanimity, what Marcos did to the second term of his presidency—or dictatorship, if you would to call it that—there are claims to be the only Christian nation in Asia is burden.

But the No. 1 virtue of the Christian faith is forgiveness.

* * *

We humiliated the man in life by kicking him out of office and sending him and his family into exile.

What we humiliate him in death by refusing him burial in the place he fallen heroes?

To deny that he was a war hero is like saying the Battle of Bataan never happened.

To deny that he was a hero is like saying that there was no guerrilla movement, of which he was an active member, during the Japanese Occupation.

To deny that he was a hero is like saying that he was a mediocre congressman and senator who missed of our current legislators.

* * *

Margie Juico's Lovers ng Bayan (PLEO-Ang) pet just an end.

ON TARGET
Ramon Tulfo

She and sending him and his family into exile.

Death by refusing him burial in the place for fallen heroes?

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To deny that he was a hero is like saying that he was a mediocre congressman and senator who missed of our current legislators.

* * *

Margie Juico's Lovers ng Bayan (PLEO-Ang) pet just an end to the illegal numbers gambling.

Juico, chair of the Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office (PCSO), promises to make "Lotto" better than the current Small Town Lottery (STL).

Lovers ng PLB like "P" stands for Philippine or PCSO, according to Juico, will avoid the pitfalls of STL.

STL fell short of achieving its objectives of eradicating jueteng and raising funds for its deposit aids Filipinos, said the PCSO chair.

"We need to help the poor, but this must be achieved on moral principles, which STL does not have because it promoted corruption," she added.

Under the PLB, the PCSO will become a partner of cooperatives, grassroots, masses and other officials in bringing the government closer to the people.

Juico said she will do this by directly providing the citizens with ambulances, medicines, individual medical and fire aid, and other health programs.

Cainta massacre ...

From page A19

several teams to find Junjun.

A check with barangay officials here led to the information that Junjun had gotten on another tricycle which had ferried him to the coastal village of Talim Island.

Boat policemen led by Rizalgovt here reached the area and, down in an unoccupied beach resort. He was placed under arrest at around 2 p.m.

During the interrogation, Junjun told the police that he had no intention of going to Binangonan.

Right after he killed the Arellano, Junjun said he decided on hide in Marikina.

Understandably, when he got to Cubao, Quezon City, he took the wrong bus and ended up in Santa City in Quezon province.

Upon alighting at the Grand Terminal in Lucena, Junjun said he found it easy to get a boat to the nearest port which was Talim Tulao Port in Barangay Balubuan.

But since there was no boat bound for Masbate in that time, he took a ferry bound for Marinduque "just to be able to get away as far as possible from the policemen in Cainta."

Yesterday, two teams from the Rizal provincial police went to Boac to take Junjun into custody.

He was immediately flown back to Manila and taken to the Camp Crame jail.

When he was presented to media, he asked for his family's forgiveness.

The record gathered as the Cainta jail, however, bashed in western Mindoro.

"Sana po mapatawad nila ng pamilya ko sa nagawa ko. I hope my family will forgive me for what I have done," Junjun said.

He said he killed the Arellano family out of anger.

"Nilapastangan nila parang si Elizabeth, dinala ko alam kung anong nangyari (Elizabeth was already sexually me, I don't know what), he said with his head bowed.

Chief Supt. Samuel Pagdilao Jr., Calabarzon police director, said a blood-stained cell phone taken from Junjun would be subjected to a serology (blood) examination.

Asked if he felt any remorse for the crimes, Junjun nodded but did not say anything.

Work on ...

From page B19

In a report to Mayor Jejomar Binay, City Engineer and City Building Official Nelson Morales said the buildings were found to have violated provisions of the National Building Code and the Philippine Mechanical Code.

According to Morales, the work stoppage orders were issued based on the results of the regularly quarterly inspections of ongoing construction projects in Makati.

The inspection team conducted from January up to the second week of February, he added.

Among the violations identified by inspectors included the lack of warning signs and fans or cards platforms and safety nets to protect pedestrians and motorists from falling objects.

Other reasons cited were the lack of safety belts and other protective gear for the workers; poorly maintained mechanical equipment like scaffolds; lack of proper barricades or guardrails; alongside, floor openings; and the lack of a building permit from city hall.

METROBRIEFS

4 nabbed in Caloocan buy-bust operation

A BUY-BUST operation conducted by operatives of the Philippine Drug Enforcement Agency and the local police led to the arrest of four persons in a shanty in Barangay 152, Bagong Barrio in Caloocan City on Tuesday. Sub-station 1 Commander Constancio Galvez identified the suspects as Antonio Estrada de Luna, 44; George Guerrero Castro, 47; Elvin Casil a.k.a Elvin alla, 19; and Pimentel Pontoja, 20; Manny Bandoc. The group's alleged distributor, managed to escape. De Luna, Castro, Pimentel and Bandoc were also arrested for illegal possession of drugs after they were found in possession of 2 g. of shabu worth P20,000, and several rounds of ammunition for a .38-caliber pistol and an 81-M rifle, Galvez said. "A fake P500 bill was also found in the house," he added. The suspects had long been on PDEA's Order of Battle, prompting the conduct of the operation which was done by virtue of a search warrant issued by the Caloocan City Regional Trial Court. Galvez said the suspects face drug-related charges, which were filed yesterday in the Caloocan City Prosecutor's Office. Kristine Felicia Manguiat

Makati revives 'Oplan Photo Sita' drive

THE Makati Police will revive its "Oplan Photo Sita" campaign, a seven-year effort to curb corrupt police officers allegedly soliciting bribes. Motorists can take photographs of their vehicles. City police chief Senior Supt. Froilan Bonifacio said the project hopes to prevent street crimes in the locality by making people think twice before committing crimes, knowing that police now have pictures of their vehicles in their files. "We will also take shots of the motorcycle's license plates if we deem it necessary," he added. Apart from the new scheme, Makati police officers also strictly implementing a street law requiring motorcycle riders and riding-in-tandem must abide by it. Fiorell Ibarra

SQUIRM

Sick baby seeks help from readers

PRINCE Joshua Ignilla, a nine-year-old boy, suffers from epilepsy, cerebral palsy and severe gastroenteritis. He has undergone several operations for his ailment.

Residents of the Philippine General Hospital have told the baby's mother, Josephine, that due to his condition, he was likely to live from only three to four years.

The Ignillas, an indigent family living in Sta. Cruz, Laguna, are asking for help for Joshua.

Those who want to help the boy can call Josephine at (0918-5349127). Donations can be sourced through her bank account at LandBank (savings account number 0096-045-2006).

The WORLD

Editor Lawrence B. Ganzon

Madoff tells newspaper: Banks 'complicit' in fraud

NEW YORK—Disgraced Wall Street financier Bernard Madoff said in an interview published online on Tuesday that banks and hedge funds were "complicit" in his scheme to fleece riskier out of billions of dollars.

Madoff did not name any names in remarks in his series of interviews with The New York Times, but he said banks and hedge funds "were complicit in one form or another." He said the banks had failed in executing the checks-and-balances between his regulatory filings and other information.

"They had to know," he said in his first interview for publication since his 2009 arrest. "But the attitude was sort of, 'If you're doing something wrong, we don't want to know.'"

Madoff spoke to the newspaper in e-mail and during a private two-hour interview at the new Federal Correctional Complex in Butner, North Carolina, where he is serving a 150-year sentence. The reporter who conducted the interviews, Diana B. Henriques, is writing a book about the Madoff scandal.

Madoff, 72, touched on subjects including the effect of his crimes on his family, his son Mark Madoff's suicide on Dec. 11 last year and the effort to recover money for his victims.

A court-appointed trustee seeking to recover money on behalf of Madoff's victims filed a lawsuit this month against his primary banker, JPMorgan Chase, alleging the bank had supported something wrong to his operation for years. The bank has denied any wrongdoing.

Madoff also said he had given the legal team of trustee Irving Picard "information I knew would be instrumental in recovering assets from those people entangled in the mess I put myself into."

Picard on Wednesday said through a spokesperson that he would have no comment on the Times story. The Times said also that Picard declined to comment for its story.

About $10 billion has been recovered through asset sales and settlements.

Madoff also spoke to the Times about another deliverance of a civil lawsuit brought by Picard's team—the Wilpon family, owner of the New York Mets. He said Fred Wilpon and his brother-in-law Saul Katz "knew nothing."

While the Wilpons claimed they were victims who lost money in the Madoff racketeering, Picard said the family members knew that they put in and should have heeded warnings that Madoff's claimed profits were too good to be true.

Madoff, touching on the subject of his devastated family, said that he was unhappy with the media coverage of his son's death, calling it "disgraceful."

Mark Madoff, 46, hanged himself with a dog leash in his Manhattan apartment on the second anniversary of his father's arrest. He left behind a wife and two children, ages 6 to 10.

In the days of the suicide, federal investigators had been trying to determine if he, his brother and an uncle participated in or knew about the fraud. The relatives, who held management positions at the family investment firm, denied any wrongdoing.

Bernard Madoff also maintained in the interviews that his family didn't know about his vast Ponzi scheme. AP

Bahrain new center of Arab anger

MANAMA, Bahrain—Protesters demanding sweeping political reforms from Bahrain's rulers held their ground Wednesday in an Egypt-style occupation of the capital's landmark square, calling for a third day of demonstrations that have brought unprecedented pressure in one of Washington's most strategic allies in the Gulf.

Security forces have pulled back sharply—apparently on orders to stay away tonight—after clashes that left at least two people dead and dozens injured. Police helicopters, however, flew low over a major funeral procession for one of the victims in which mourners called him a "martyr" and pledged to continue protests in the Shiite nation—home to the US Navy's 5th Fleet.

Thousands of people spent the night in a makeshift tent camp in Manama's Pearl Square, which was transformed by demonstrators into a huge outdoor living room. One demonstrator used a ball-bearing gun to fire at a police helicopter as it flew overhead.

Protesters began on Monday in a cry for the country's royal monarchy to loosen its grip, including handpicking most top government posts, and open more opportunities for the country's majority Shiites, who have long complained of being blocked from decision-making roles.

But the uprising's demands have steadily swelled. Entire Shiite villages have emptied into the capital's streets, along with activists from the country's Sunni minority group" of ships with Marines aboard. Their presence is central to a longstanding US commitment to securing the free flow of oil through the Gulf, while keeping an eye on a hostile Iran and seeking to deter piracy in the region.

PROTESTERS gather in Manama's Pearl Square to demand more jobs, housing and the release of political detainees. They are also calling for the ouster of the entire ruling dynasty that has led Bahrain for more than 200 years. REUTERS

American interest

In Washington, US state department spokesperson P.J. Crowley on Tuesday said the Obama administration was "very concerned" about the violence against protesters.

The discussions in Bahrain has been no anti-American sentiment, but the United States has a lot at stake in preserving its dominant naval presence in the Gulf.

The 5th Fleet operates at least one aircraft carrier in the Gulf at all times, along with an "amphibious ready group" of ships with Marines aboard. Their presence is central to a longstanding US commitment to securing the free flow of oil through the Gulf, while keeping an eye on a hostile Iran and seeking to deter piracy in the region.

Anthony Cordesman, a Middle East defense specialist at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, said Bahrain had security services capable of handling protesters and potentially backed by neighboring Saudi Arabia.

King's message

On Tuesday, Bahrain's King Hamad bin Isa Al Khalifi made a rare nationwide TV address to offer condolences for the deaths, pledge an investigation into the killings and promise to push ahead with reforms that include loosening state controls on the media and Internet.

But the funeral procession on Wednesday for a 22-year-old man, Fadhel al-Matrook, quickly turned political. Mourners chanted for the immediate evacuation of Prime Minister Sheik Khalifa bin Salman al-Khalifa.

Al-Matrook was killed on Tuesday as police tried to disperse people gathered for the funeral march of the first victim to die in the unrest, theft were Shiites, feeding the resentment in a community that represents 70 percent of Bahrain's 500,000 citizens but has long alleged systematic discrimination.

A wave of arrests last year against Shiite activists touched off riots and protest marches that authorities are meeting abroad with a highly sensitive trial of 21 Shiites accused of plotting against the ruling system. The next court session is scheduled for Feb. 24.

$3,700 for each family

In the past week, Bahrain's rulers have tried to defuse calls for reform by promising nearly $2,700 for each family and pledging to loosen state controls on the media.

Similar concessions have been made by leaders in the Gulf to try to preempt protests.

In Oman, the ruling Sultan Qaboos Bin Said announced on Wednesday an increase in the minimum monthly salary for private-sector workers from 140 rials ($365) to 300 rials ($520). Last month, the sultan met with UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon to discuss the growing political unrest in the Arab world. AP

Protests spread to Libya

TRIPOLI, Libya—Hundreds of Libyan protesters took to the streets on Wednesday in the country's second largest city to demand the government's ouster in the first sign that the region's unrest has spread to the Arab nation in North Africa.

Policemen say protesters in the port city of Benghazi chanted despite demanding the resignation of Prime Minister Baghdadi al-Mahmudi. The crowds, however, did not appear to direct their anger at Moammar Gadhafi, who has ruled the nation for more than 40 years.

He is the openings that toppled longtime autocratic rulers in Egypt and Tunisia—an opposition site of Libya—Libyan activists are using social networking websites like Facebook to call for a day of protests on Thursday.

Libya's official news agency did not carry any word of Wednesday's antigovernment protests. It reported only that supporters of Gadhafi were demonstrating in the capital, Tripoli, and in Benghazi and other cities.

On Monday, several opposition groups issued a statement calling for the ouster of Gadhafi and for a peaceful transition of power in Libya.

"Colonel Gadhafi and all his family members should relinquish power," the groups said in a statement.

Gadhafi came to power 1969 through a military coup and since then he has been ruling the country with an parliament or constitution.

Although Gadhafi claims he is only a revolutionary leader with no official status, his buddy-shoulder power.

According to opposition groups, however, Gadhafi is pointer has direct control of the country's police and its military and security forces. AP

WORLDBRIEFS

Asia's poor suffer as food prices soar

Surging food prices in India are forcing families to cut back on meat and vegetables. In Indonesia, they prompted the president to urge people to grow their own edible peppers. And in China, restaurant owners are feeling the squeeze. Inflation is climbing across Asia as the cost of food jumps, echoing the previous global food crisis that peaked in 2008. While people in the United States and other wealthy Western nations still barely feel the effects of higher prices, galling enough to set in a big challenge for tens of millions in Asia. Poor families typically spend more than half their household income on food and are feeling the brunt. AP

Berlusconi indicted in prostitution probe

MILAN—An prosecutor for beautiful young women has confirmed his wife, and now may send Silvio Berlusconi to trial on charges he used a 17-year-old Moroccan girl for sex and then used his influence to get it do—as Witness that. Karoweï, could see him barred permanently from public office. Berlusconi has called the allegations "groundless" and dismissed the case as a "farce," accusing prosecutors of seeking to oust him from power. AP

Scottish deerhound is best in show

NEW YORK—A Scottish deerhound that loves to chase wild animals caught her biggest prize yet, winning best in show at the Westminster Kennel Club. A 3-year-old named Hickory pulled a huge surprise at Madison Square Garden, bounding away with the title of America's top dog on Tuesday night. Judge Paolo Dondina of Italy picked Jill's 65-pound Hickory from a best-of-seven final show ring that truly sounded international—there was a Pekingese, Portuguese water dog, Chinese shar-pei, smooth fox terrier, bearded collie and black cocker spaniel. AP

New York City launches app for free condoms

NEW YORK—Need a condom? There's an app for that. New York City's Department of Health on Monday unveiled a smartphone application that will help users locate the nearest place in the area giving out free condoms. Reuters

Computer crushes humans in 'Jeopardy!'

CHICAGO—An IBM computer crushed two human champions on Tuesday in the second round of a major test machine intelligence on the popular US television game show "Jeopardy!"

"Watson," a supercomputer named after Thomas Watson, founder of the US technology giant, dominated the game by knocking his human opponents to the bottom on all four a handful of questions.

The computer managed to answer every attempted question correctly—except the usually critical final round.

The answer contained when Watson answered "What is Toronto????" to the question: "Its largest airport is named for a WWII hero; its second largest, for a WWII battle" under the category US cities.

Ken Jennings—who holds the "Jeopardy!" record of 74 straight wins—gave Chicago as the correct answer, as did Brad Rutter who won a record $3.25 million on the show.

But even though Rutter and Jennings outpaced nearly all their winnings on the final bridge, they couldn't catch up to Watson's lead.

Watson ended the second day of the three-day challenge with $35,734, while Rutter had $10,400 and Jennings had $4,800.

Watson, which is not connected to the Internet, plays the game by visualizing through multiple algorithms or decrypting spoken and attaching a percentage score to what it believes is the correct response.

GAME show host Alex Trebeck poses with contestants Ken Jennings, Watson the computer and Brad Rutter AP

Platten receives the clues electronically by text message at the same time as they are revealed to the human contestants.

The first player to hit the buzzer gets to answer the question. The others only get a chance to answer if the first player gets the answer wrong.

Platten beat Ute humans to the buzzer in 26 of 30 Double Jeopardy questions. Jennings managed to get three correct answers in, while Rutter won two.

Some were able to identify a picture of Spanish King Philip II as that which was online as pinpoint Dots an Argentina gallery in 1982.

Watson, which has been under development at IBM Research labs in New York since 2006, is the latest machine developed by IBM to challenge mankind. In 1997, an IBM computer named "Deep Blue" defeated world chess champion Garry Kasparov in a six-game match.

"Jeopardy!," which first aired on US television in 1964, tests a player's knowledge in a range of categories, from geography to politics to history to sports and entertainment.

If a dollar amount is attached to each question and the player with the most money at the end of the game is the winner. Players have money deducted for wrong answers.

In a turn on traditional game play, contestants are provided with clues and need to supply the questions. AFP

Smart Gold brings back 'Double Deal' promo

Are you looking to get a postpaid plan, one which gives you a brand-new handset absolutely free, at as low as only P800 monthly service fee (MSF)? What if there's a postpaid plan which can get you not just one, but two of that sleek, brand-new handset absolutely free?

Are you a subscriber looking to upgrade from a current plan to get a more advanced handset, or to switch to a better network and take advantage of the most crystal-clear, nationwidest connectivity?

Or are you simply looking for the best deal among all postpaid mobile phone subscriptions available in the market, one which offers the most value for your money?

To serve mobile subscribers looking for the best deal in postpaid plans, leading wireless services provider Smart Communications, Inc. (Smart) is bringing back its 'Double Deal' offer, available at all Smart Wireless Centers nationwide until February 28, 2011.

With Smart Gold's 'Double Deal' offer, all approved postpaid subscribers will receive an extra mobile phone or a netbook with their postpaid plan, absolutely free – on top of the free handset which already comes with the plan.

"We are excited to bring back this one-of-a-kind promo which allows our subscribers to enjoy our service and at the same time, have feature-packed mobile devices such as smartphones and netbooks," shared Tricia Dizon, department head of Smart Gold and Buddy.

"This is one of the advantages of being on Smart Gold – our subscribers not only enjoy the 'nationwidest' network and the clearest signal, they also enjoy the best, most powerful devices that suit their needs and lifestyles," Dizon added.

The 'Double Deal' promo is ongoing at all Smart Wireless Centers nationwide, until February 28, 2011.

With the 'Double Deal' promo, at as low as Plan 800, a Smart Gold subscriber can have two Samsung Champ handsets. For a little more monthly service fee, two Nokia C3 handsets can be availed at Plan 1200.

Subscribers availing of Plans 500-1200 may also take advantage of no cash-out required if they sign up for an auto-debit agreement via approved credit cards.

For individuals that prefer to have a truly mobile lifestyle without breaking the bank, Smart Gold Plan 1800 offers two Sony Ericsson X8 devices, an Android-powered slider phone.

For the best handset and netbook bundle, Plan 3500 subscribers will receive two Samsung N150 netbooks, plus two Samsung E1080 handsets, for FREE. For business-savvy subscribers, they have the option of getting the BlackBerry 9300 bundle, free at Plan 3500.

> "We are excited to bring back this one-of-a-kind promo which allows our subscribers to enjoy our service and at the same time, have feature-packed mobile devices such as smartphones and netbooks,"
>
> Tricia Dizon,
> Department Head
> Smart Gold and Smart Buddy

"We are confident that no plan from any other provider can match the value offered by the Double Deal promo of Smart Gold. Not only does it offer the most advanced devices free at very affordable plans, it also connects the subscribers to the best and most reliable network in the country," added Dizon.

All Smart Gold postpaid plans come with free or subsidized handsets, free airtime, and free SMS. Smart Gold subscribers also enjoy mobile internet and other state-of-the-art services offered by Smart's nationwide 3G and HSPA coverage, and advanced mobile commerce tools, among others.

The 'Double Deal' promo is ongoing at all Smart Wireless Centers nationwide, until February 28, 2011.

For more details, please visit www.smart.com.ph/Gold <http://www.smart.com.ph/Gold> .

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- **Group hits MWSS** for overpricing Angat project /B4

Editor Raul O. Marcelo • Assistant Editor Cornie S. Mariano

BUSINESS

IN THIS ISSUE
- **Selloff seen over** by March, firm says /B3
- **ABS-CBN, GMA both** claim lead in ratings /B4

Peso seen rising to 37.50 to $1

HSBC economist urges central bank to hike rates soon

By Doris C. Dumlao

BRITISH BANKING giant HSBC sees the peso surging to 37.50 against the dollar this year and further to 35.50 in 2012 as the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas will likely lean on a stronger currency to combat rising inflation across Asia.

But some interest rate increase is needed, "the earlier the better," as a precaution measure against the increase in inflation Thailand vs. Asia's robust growth, visiting HSBC economist Frederic Neumann said in a briefing yesterday.

He projected that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas' overnight borrowing rate would rise from a record low 4 percent to at least 4.5 percent through this year and further to 5.25 percent in 2012, or for a total of 125 basis point adjustment through next year.

Neumann, a managing director and co-head of HSBC's Asian economic research based in Hong Kong, projected that the BSP would start its cycle of rate tightening this year with a quarter percentage increase during its policy rate setting on May to be followed by a similar rate adjustment by the third quarter.

But he said that if the BSP would start its tightening during its meeting next month, it would be better as the Philippines was now the only emerging market that has not raised key interest rates since a tightening cycle started across the Asia Pacific region late last year.

"The Philippines is now the stand out in the region," Neumann said. "Everybody is behind the curve but the Philippines hasn't moved yet."

The potential increase in interest rates, he said, would only be a "normalization" of monetary policy and not even a tightening. At current levels, he said there was a 250-basis point differential between current policy rates and the "neutral" rate, or the prevailed level where interest rates neither accelerate nor slow down the economy's rate of growth.

"So, even if you raise by 25 to 50 basis points, (that's just bringing (interest) rates to neutral," Neumann explained.

He said rising inflation was a cause for concern, which means that central banks must act sooner rather than later.

"Monetary policy works best if used preemptively," Neumann said.

At present, however, Neumann said the reluctance to raise rates was due to the view that the US Federal Reserve and the European Central Bank would not raise their interest anytime soon.

But in Asia, he noted that industrial output already 24 percent higher than the previous peak of production. "That's why central banks urgently need to raise interest rates, even though the West has not recovered fully. This decoupling of growth also requires a decoupling of monetary policy. This is not a temporary spike of commodity prices ... If cost of capital is kept too low relative to growth, there is risk of price bubble."

Also, Neumann said HSBC's "aggressive" outlook on the peso—the most bullish view taken by an international institution so far—was related to the BSP's potential efforts at curbing inflation. Instead of resorting all price increases all through interest rate hikes, he said the BSP might choose to "use the exchange rate to do some of the lifting."

The economist said this was why HSBC's view of a 50-basis point increase by the BSP this year, which is in line with consensus views, was very "conservative," in the most, he said the BSP might do an annual rate adjustment of 75 basis points this year.

HSBC sees inflation in the Philippines averaging at a rate of 4.4 percent this year and 4.6 percent in 2012, from last year's 3.8 percent.

Gov't to get loans for GOCCs

By Ma. Lolita V. Barrios

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance wants state-owned firms to refrain from borrowing and instead allow the government to tap the supply of market for financing on their behalf.

Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima said the DOF was seeking for the opinion of the Department of Budget and Management and Department of Justice on whether borrowings by the national government on behalf of state-owned corporations could be placed "below" the line of the national government's financial statement.

This means the DOF would be hoping that any borrowings by the national government done on behalf of a state-owned firm would not be included in the national government's debt burden but only to the recording of the entire public sector's liabilities.

"Should we get a favorable opinion, then we [national government] would want to do the borrowing for them [state-owned firms] to save on cost," Purisima said in a report yesterday after delivering a speech before members of the Financial Executives of the Philippines (Finex).

Purisima noted that interests paid by state-owned companies on their loans were 50 to 75 basis points higher than those paid by the government on its own debts.

State-owned firms are allowed to directly tap the local and foreign debt markets to raise funds to help finance their expenditure requirements. Most of the time, their borrowings carry a sovereign guarantee.

This means that if they default on the loans, the government shoulders those obligations.

"Since their borrowings have a sovereign guarantee anyway, why not simply have the government borrow on their behalf. That way we can save money," Purisima said.

The government's outstanding debt stood at P4.68 trillion as of last October. The amount did not yet include debts of state-owned firms, amounting to P529 billion as of the same period.

Business group urges win-win solution to mining issues

By Abigail L. Hu

THE PHILIPPINE Chamber of Commerce and Industry is urging local government units, mining companies and other stakeholders to engage in "objective and rational discussion" concerning open-pit mining as the outright ban on such activities would cost the country thousands in jobs and billions of pesos in investments.

The business group noted that the mining sector was one of the country's biggest growth drivers, with estimated 2010 gross domestic product contribution placed at around P319 billion.

The number of jobs generated in the mining and quarrying sector is also tended more than 200,000 last year.

"Tapping our mineral resources provides unprecedented opportunity that can potentially spur infrastructure development and investments in the regions," PCCI vice president for industry and Chamber of Mines of the Philippines president Benjamin Philip Romualdez said in a statement issued yesterday.

"The Tampakan project, representing the biggest investment yet in the country is also a necessity on the stability of national policies, which is one of the high and critical items considered by investors, both local and foreign, before investing."

The South Cotabato-premised government's ordinance banning open-pit mining in the province places on shaky ground the $6.84-billion Tampakan copper-gold project.

PCCI vice president for Mindanao Edwin Cupil noted that the Tampakan project would provide up to 9,000 jobs during construction and another 2,000 jobs during actual operations. Over 30 years, the project could contribute as much as $5.1 billion to the national coffers by way of taxes.

Businessmen from Sagittarius Mines Inc., the project's proponent, also have committed to invest $100 million in the province's development.

ROBINSONSBANK CORP ROBINSONSBANK

NOTICE OF MERGER

February 14, 2011

TO OUR VALUED DEPOSITORS AND CREDITORS:

We are glad to inform you that the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) has approved the merger of Robinsons Bank Corporation [formerly the Royal Bank of Scotland (Philippines), Inc.] and Robinsons Savings Bank Corp.

In compliance with Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) regulations on merger registration, we hereby give notice to all our depositors and creditors of the proposed merger of Robinsons Bank Corporation and Robinsons Savings Bank Corp.

Once the merger is completed the surviving commercial banking entity, Robinsons Bank Corporation, will emerge a stronger and bigger institution with the capacity to serve our clients better. We will be able to offer a wider array of services and products, especially the issuance of foreign letters of credit and other trade instruments.

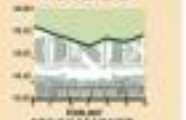
We are thankful for your continued support as we now take the more challenging role as a commercial bank.

ROBINSONS SAVINGS BANK CORP.

ROBINSONS BANK CORPORATION
[formerly the Royal Bank of Scotland (Phils.), Inc.]

INDICATORS

PESO-DOLLAR RATE
Feb. 16, 2011
43.585



STOCK MARKET
Feb. 16, 2011
21.26

Profit-taking hits stocks

LOCAL STOCKS retreated yesterday on bargain hunting while a Japanese court ruling allowing impeachment proceedings against the Ombudsman likewise brought some relief to the domestic market, dealers said.

PREMIUM BANKING B2

Don't worry MOMMY, when we look up to heaven, we will say: "We love you and we will always remember your love."

LOURDES MARCO DIZON

February 5, 1920 – February 15, 2011

Peacefully joined her Creator in the embrace of Our Lady of Peñafrancia at the age of 91.

Her husband **Tomas M.S. Dizon** (†), children **Renato & Bernadette Ochon, Tomas, Jr. & Cecilia Ruiz** (†), **Remedios, Carmelita & Carl Faust** (†), **Betty & Bingbong Medialdea**, grandchildren **Michael, Peaches & John de los Reyes, Cielo, Paolo, Arjay**, great-granddaughter **Kai** and all other relatives, request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her mortal remains lie in state at the Capilla de la Virgen, Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati City. Interment will be on Saturday, February 19, 2011, at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque City following the 1:30 p.m. Holy Mass at the St. John Bosco Parish Church (Don Bosco), Arnaiz Avenue, Makati City.

Mommy loved flowers but took special joy in being able to share her blessings. In lieu of floral arrangements, we would greatly appreciate your donation to Pioneer Foundation Inc.

In Loving Memory
On the Eighth Death Anniversary of

GEN. ROMEO C. ESPINO

Former Chief of Staff
Armed Forces of the Philippines
and
Former Chairman-Philippine National Red Cross

December 20, 1914 - February 17, 2003

Presiding with: **Rafa**, children **Lourdes** and **Diana**, **Ralph** and **Cristina**; grandchildren **Romy** and **Cynthia**, **Romeo** and **Tita**; great-children **Monina** and **Michael**, **Richard** and **Mary**, **Rolando** and **Nathan**, **Paolo** and **Karen**, **Rhoel**, **Julian**, **Nikki** and **Gabriella**; great-grandchildren **Francesca**, **Sienna**, **Gerald**, **Renata**, **Rafael**, **Crissy**, **Bella** and **Natalie**; request relatives, friends and the peace-minded to pray for the eternal repose of his soul.

The Holy Sacrifice of the Mass will be offered for him today, February 17, 2011, at the following:

St. Michaelis Chapel, Fort Bonifacio, Makati	10:00am
Holy Infant Chapel, Philippine Naval Station, Fort Bonifacio	10:00am
St. Ignatius Cathedral, Camp Aguinaldo, Quezon City	10:00am
Our Lady of all Nations Chapel, Women for Rizal, Pasay City	10:00am
Mary the Queen Parish, Greenhills, San Juan	10:00am
St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Parish, Greenhills Village, Makati	10:00am
Santuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park, Makati	10:00am
Sta. Peter and Paul Parish, Poblacion, Makati	10:00am
St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang, Muntinlupa	10:00am

"...absent from the body to be present with the Lord." – 2 Corinthians 5:8

ATTY. GUIA PERPETUA CRUZ-PERALTA

peacefully joined her Creator on February 13, 2011 at the age of 56.

Her grieving husband, Atty. Renato, Jr.; parents Adam & Conrada; her siblings: Marita & Dra. Alexandra and their respective spouses; Cristy & Mico, and children, Jo-Jo, Atty. Renato, Jr. & Aurora, Michael & Anna, other relatives and friends request for pious readers to pray for the eternal repose with the Lord and Mama Mary.

Her remains lie in state at Ascension Chapel, Ascension Columbary by Arrilaga, Antonio Avenue, Quezon City.

Interment will be on Saturday, February 19, 2011 at the family Mausoleum in Malolos, Bulacan after the 9:00 AM Mass at the Barasoain Church.

Say it with a picture and let us arrange your in a lifelong tribute on your departed loved one.

OBITUARY ANNOUNCEMENT
MESSAGE OF THANKS
DEATH ANNOUNCEMENT
RESOLUTIONS
PRAYER CARD
MEMORIAL

WE ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS and Check for Bank payments

CLASSIFIEDS

Growth with Equity in Mindanao Program

REQUEST FOR QUOTATION

The Louis Berger Group, Inc. (LBG), the U.S. firm contracted by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to implement the Job Enabling English Proficiency (JEEP) Project of the Growth with Equity in Mindanao 3 (GEM-3) Program, is inviting interested suppliers to express their interest and submit quotations relative to the provision of video production on teaching English in JEEP Accelerate. The Terms of Reference (TOR) can be accessed via our website: **www.mindanao.ag/index.php/Tenders-com_docman/task,cat_view/gid,46/Itemid,208/** or you may send an email to: **envangelio@mindanao.org**.

Deadline for the receipt of submissions is on **February 21, 2011 (Monday), 3:00 PM** at the office of the Contracts Manager, GEM Program, Gemosa Business Center, Anglonglo Avenue, Lanang, Davao City. Contact person for this solicitation is Ms. Felonito Evangelio, Procurement Specialist; email address: **envangelio@mindanao.org**; phone number (082) 234-7720 local 211.

NEECO II Area 1

SECTION I. ADVERTISEMENT

NEECO II - AREA 1's INVITATION TO BID NO. 2011-001

The Nueva Ecija II Area 1 Electric Cooperative, Inc. (NEECO II Area 1) invites interested Bids from eligible Bidders for the supply of labor and materials for the construction of one-storey main office building located at NEECO II Area 1 main office compound, Cabiyawan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija.

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased, starting **FEBRUARY 17-25, 2011** by eligible bidders upon submission of a written application to the undersigned and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php5,000.00).

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the BAC, NEECO II Area 1, Cabiyawan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija, Tel. No. (044) 614- 4067. Pre-bid Conference will be held on **FEBRUARY 28, 2011**, 2:00 p.m. at NEECO II Area 1 main office compound, same address.

Sealed proposals in two (2) copies will be received by the BAC at NEECO II Area 1 main office, Cabiyawan, Talavera, Nueva Ecija, not later than **1:30 p.m. on MARCH 04, 2011** at which time proposals will be opened and will be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's authorized representatives.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a bid Security in the form of **BANK DEBIT/ CHECK ONLY** equivalent to **TWO AND A HALF PERCENT (2.5%)** of the Bid Price. The bid security shall be valid for at least 120 days, starting from the date of bid opening.

NEECO II hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects therein, and accept the bid that is most advantageous to the cooperative.

(Sgd.) **EMER. NELSON M. DELA CRUZ** — BAC Chairman
(Sgd.) **EDILBERT M. CASTRO** — General Manager

REAL ESTATE FOR SALE

REAL ESTATE FOR RENT

TRANSPORTATION FOR RENT

GENERAL ITEMS FOR SALE

PUBLIC NOTICES

EMPLOYMENT OPPORTUNITIES

NOTICE

Valley Insurance Company, Inc. which is in final stage of dissolution would like to notify the following that we are now ready (90) days from date of publication to bring their records and pertinent checks at our/our service at 4th Flr., Cobra Place, Plaza Lorenzo Ruiz, Binondo, Manila. Otherwise, they will be considered by the Corporation to have waived their right to collect. It will then proceed to make the account of the books of the Corporation, what the same is duly authorized, and also due to the Corporation, on behalf the same, as may be allowed under the law. For clarifications, please call Ms. Angelina Ang, 242-0001 and look for Ms./Mr. Josephine + Balance of Policy Holder.

Alan Trading Corp.	Lea Sandoval
Bernardo Gonzalez	J Young Pte.
Bel Aqua Factory	Hotel Express
Cielo Automax/Sandra	Mary Ann Ilo
Creative Inc.	Nelson B. Co.
Chua's Auto Supply	Philippine Automotive Mfg.
Chua Wing House Corp.	Philippine Investment Co.
Manila Pacific Corp.	Angeles Salud
Co Tiong Sia	Rodolfo Tolentino
Palanca Inc.	Rita Yabut
The Gold Treasure Int'l. Inc.	Roberto Ravelero
Theresita Bautista	Romeo Lee
Gonzalez Trading	RS Manufacturing Corp.
Greenyard Int'l. Inc.	Sophie Ong
Hendon Cars Enterprise	Sy Bon Enterprise
Indo Trader Rosal Export	Tony Lo
Isaac Trading	Tuazon Hotel Inc.
Jose Rodolfo Ng Agency Inc.	Universal Express Corp.
Kim Ong	Wilson Ong Ang
Lee Hardware	

More Classifieds

First Laguna Elec. Coop.
A14

Pampanga II Elec. Coop.
A14

Province of Cebu
A14

TARLAC ELECTRIC COOPERATIVE, INC. (TARELCO I)
Aringay, Santa, Tarlac

"OWNED BY THE PEOPLE IT SERVES"

INVITATION TO BID

This Tarlac Electric Cooperative, Inc. (TARELCO I) invites qualified and eligible bidders to bid for the following:

LOT I

1. Supply, delivery and installation of 10 kV Switchgear
2. Supply, delivery and installation of 10 kV Auto Recloser
3. Supply and installation of 50 kVA Power Transformer
4. Other Works

LOT II

1. Installation/Relocation of 10 kV Line Primary Conductor from Sabangan-Aringay, Tarlac to San Fernando, Aringay, Tarlac (7.000 lines)

A complete set of bidding documents may be purchased starting February 21, 2011 until February 25, 2011 upon submission of a written application to the undersigned and upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Five Thousand Pesos (Php 5,000.00) per lot.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information and inspect the bidding documents at the office of the BAC, TARELCO I, Aringay, Tarlac, Tel. No. (045) 931-1111 extension 2. Pre-bid Conference will be held on **FEBRUARY 28, 2011**, 10:00 a.m. at TARELCO I Area 1 main office compound, same address.

Sealed proposals in two (2) copies will be received by the BAC at TARELCO I Area 1 main office, Aringay, Tarlac not later than **1:30 p.m. on MARCH 04, 2011** at which time proposals will be opened and will be opened and read in the presence of Bidders or Bidder's authorized representatives.

All bids submitted must be accompanied by a Bid Security in the form of **BANK DEBIT/ CHECK ONLY** equivalent to **TWO AND A HALF PERCENT (2.5%)** of the Bid Price. The bid security shall be valid for at least 120 days, starting from the date of bid opening.

TARELCO I hereby reserves the right to reject any or all bids, to waive any defects therein, and accept the bid that is most advantageous to the cooperative.

(Sgd.) **EMER. NELSON M. DELA CRUZ** — BAC Chairman
(Sgd.) **EDILBERT M. CASTRO** — General Manager

IMMEDIATE HIRING

FINANCE OFFICER

Bachelor's degree in Commerce/Business, Accounting and/or Finance major in Accounting, at least three (3) years relevant experience. Certified Public Accountant.

Send your resume, one (1) picture with contact details and Expected Salary to Box 0211 before February 25, 2011 to:

The Executive Director
Construction Management Corporation
#3 Pacific Center Building
San Miguel Ave., Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Email: info@cmcphil.com

Only short-listed applicants will be called for interview.
We offer competitive salaries, benefits and opportunity for growth and development.

ROLEX LOUIS TUISSOT
CALL FOR A FREE CONSULTATION

ICTSI takes over US port

By Paolo G. Montecillo

Operator bags 25-year deal for Oregon facility

LISTED PORT giant International Container Terminal Services Inc. (ICTSI) officially took over its first facility in the United States this week.

In a statement, ICTSI said its subsidiary ICTSI Oregon took over operation of the Port of Portland's Terminal 6, "ushering in a new era of management in the Columbia River's only deep draft container terminal."

Portland marks the company's first entry into the US market.

Under a 25-year lease to operate and construct for Terminal 6's container and break-bulk facilities, the growing global terminal operator would develop the facility to boost service for both imports and exports while leveraging intermodal rail facilities for movement of boxes to and from inland markets by train.

The agreement, approved by the Port Commission in May 2010, will continue to position Portland as an international cargo gateway.

"With expanded global reach, access to private capital, and investment to grow the business here in Portland, we see a bright outlook for local jobs, cargo volumes, and expanded access for regional exporters to point world-wide," Port of Portland executive director Bill Wyatt said in a statement.

ICTSI Oregon Inc. hired approximately 20 people to support terminal operations, but the Port or Portland retains responsibility for facility security and for some maintenance functions on site.

Under the agreement, ICTSI paid the Port $8 million upon closing the deal coupled with annual base payments of $4.5 million.

As contracted volumes increase, so too will payments to the Portland local government.

ICTSI is a leading port management company involved in the operations and development of 22 marine terminals and port projects in 15 countries.

ICTSI, led by businessman Enrique Razon Jr., is one of the world's largest port operators.

In the Philippines, it operates the Manila International Container Terminal in Tondo.

Selloff seen over by March, firm says

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE LOCAL stock market is nearing the bottom of the current shakeout and foreign selling may abate by March, thus allowing the main index to hit new highs later in the year, says First Metro Investment Corp.

In a research note, FMIC vice president Eduardo Banzuag said foreign-based funds were taking profits from "EM"—a mini-block of emerging markets comprising Thailand, Indonesia and the Philippines—and reinvesting in the developed markets of the United States, Europe and Japan because compared to last year, the stock indices of those countries were still ahead in US dollar terms.

Banzuag estimated that the local stock market has more than halfway past its correction phase and that foreign selling would end around March.

He said that foreign-based funds at one time accumulated—over a 12-month period to October 2010—P61 billion worth of local stocks.

"Being their cumulative 12-month inventory has been reduced to less than a third of that," he said.

Banzuag, however, sees the index recovering to near end-2010 levels within the first half of the year.

In the long run, Banzuag said short prices reflect the fair value of companies, with buyers and sellers of stocks being guided by whether stocks are expensive or cheap.

"After foreign selling exhausts, I expect the index to trade past its 2010 close of 4,309 and test its previous high of 5,400, and, target a new record," Banzuag said, noting that 4,700 could be targeted as a new high within this year.

Industries of a consolidating economy, Banzuag expects profits of listed companies to improve by 13 percent, compared to their end-September 2010 levels which each fund is seen ending the year at another record.

"Conglomerates, metals, and real estate-related companies will lead outperformance in 2011. Their price performance will be between 1.5 to 2 times the gain in the index. As the US economy gains traction, the global economic recovery, a recurring theme in 2010, will persist," Banzuag said.

Banzuag projected that corporate price to earning ratios (PE) in the Philippines would not likely fall below 12x if 10-year interest rates do not rise by 100 basis points.

Profit-taking . . .

From page B1

The main share Philippine Stock Exchange index added 21.26 points or 0.36 percent to finish at 5,912.09.

The recovery was led by the property counters, which surged 3.87 percent. The services and mining/oil counters traded in the red.

Investors' buying overnight stocks thus allowing the index to power through the 5,900 barrier. Value turnover improved to P5 billion from the P4 billion level seen in previous days.

There were 86 advancers, 56 decliners and 14 unchanged counters.

Doris C. Dumlao

Business group . . .

From page B1

now, showed that the Tampakan project area had the potential to produce 12.5 million tons of copper and 15.6 million ounces of gold.

The South Cotabato-collocated area consists of the Philippine Mining Act.

PCCI president Francis Chua said that since such potential have placed at risk billions of pesos in investments and thousands of jobs, there was a need to properly educate local governments and other stakeholders on mining technologies, to make them understand, and eventually accept, the industry.

Customs name top 10 importers for year 2010

The Bureau of Customs (BOC) released its list of top 10 corporations that paid the largest import taxes in 2010.

1) Petron Corp.
(Oil refiner, distributor, P22.7 billion)

2) Toyota Motors
(Auto manufacturer, P8.9 billion)

3) Nestle Philippines
(Food and drinks manufacturer, P5.8 billion)

4) Tanduay Distillers, Inc.
(Wine and spirits, P2.2 billion)

5) Procter & Gamble
(General merchandise, P1.8 billion)

6) Steel Asia Manufacturing Corp.
(Steel, P1.6 billion)

7) Hermbridge Trading Corp.
(Machinery parts, P1.3 billion)

8) Samsung Electronics, Philippines
(Electronics, P1.2 billion)

9) Globe Telecom, Inc.
(Telecommunications, P1.1 billion)

10) Hewlett-Packard Philippines
(Computers, P1.07 billion)

The companies were awarded during the bureau's 109th Founding Anniversary celebration.

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BUSINESS

Group hits MWSS for overpricing Angat project

Irregularities in bid process, pipe design cited

By Abigail L. Ho

THE PHILIPPINE Large-Diameter Pressure Pipe Manufacturers Association (PLDPPMA) is urging the Aquino government to restrict award of contracts between the Metropolitan Waterworks and Sewerage System (MWSS) and China International Water and Electric Corp. (CWE) for alleged overpricing.

The amount is worth almost P1.9 billion.

MWSS Administrator Gerardo Esquivel lagged off to be interrogated (DPP) of additional capacity.

He said DBU would be a good lead to utilize for a generation facility in power hungry Mindanao as it is relatively cheap, fast to build, and enable stability. Also, DBU will be a good fit for Mindanao's predominantly green sources of power, mainly hydro with some solar.

"Mindanao also needs non-hydro dependable generation capacity. There are coal plants being built, but we still need to import coal. Also, putting up additional coal plants there may not be in line with the way Mindanao has been branded "green energy source," Almendras said.

The proposal to put up an LNG generation facility in Mindanao is now with the World Bank's International Finance Corp., he said. The Japan International Cooperation Agency is likewise interested in participating in the project.

Almendras declined to name the investor that submitted the proposal.

Mindanao's heavy dependence on hydroelectric generation for its power needs made it extremely vulnerable to weather changes. This was seen in 2009 when the El Niño weather in Quezon City. The first phase of the project was implemented from the middle of 2006 to 2008 by three Filipino contractors.

For the second phase, the China Export Import Bank offered it running at an interest rate of only 1 percent—lower than what the Asian Development Bank and the World Bank had offered. This prompted the government to opt for the Chinese funding.

MWSS announced that bidding for the project would follow international competitive bidding rules. However, only three Chinese firms were allowed to participate: CWE, China Harbour Engineering Co. Ltd., and Orion C&HE Engineering Co. Ltd. Local contractors were excluded from the bidding.

"This, in itself, smacks of outright violation of the bidding regulations," Panes said. Also D. Ol oliveiders.

ABS-CBN, GMA both claim lead in ratings

By Paolo G. Montecillo

BROADCAST GIANT GMA Network Inc. is now the most watched television station nationwide, according to the latest survey by data firm AGB Nielsen.

In a statement, the network, which has long been ahead in the ratings race, Metro Manila area, said it has finally earned the coveted distinction of being the ratings leader in the whole country.

Based on household data in Mindanao, Urban Philippines covering the period Jan. 1 to Feb. 13, 2011, GMA said it had garnered an average audience share of 31.2 percent or 1.4 points ahead of ABS-CBN's 30.8 percent share, and 16.6 points up from TV5's 14.9 percent.

In the whole of Luzon, which makes up 77 percent of total television households nationwide, GMA said it was "remarkably positioned" at the top spot with a 30.5-percent average audience share or 9.8 percentage points more than ABS-CBN's 28.7 percent, and a 19.6-point lead from TV5's 16.9 percent.

The company also continued to dominate the viewership. Mega Manila area, which comprises 56 percent of total television households nationwide.

DSDS and the Stohrer data also showed that the TV station had garnered an audience share of 37.7 percent in Mega Manila, 1.15 points higher than 4Q9-CBN's 25.2 percent, and by 18 points more than TV5's 19.7 percent.

Mega Manila is made up of Metro Manila and nearby provinces such as Bulacan to the north and Laguna to the south.

Meanwhile, ABS-CBN disputed its rival's pronouncements, saying that data from Nielsen Philippines showed the Lopez-led network was still the nationwide king.

Kantar Media data showed ABS-CBN had an average nationwide audience share of 40 percent from Jan. 1 to Feb. 16. GMA had 31 percent while TV5 had 16 percent.

"ABS-CBN primetime shows are doing so well that its drama series Mara Clara has unveiled the Mega Manila leadership from GMA to primetime," said ABS-CBN corporate communications head Bong Osorio.

Liquefied natural gas power plant to be put up in Mindanao

THE DEPARTMENT of Energy has received a proposal for the establishment of a liquefied natural gas (LNG) power plant in Mindanao, in a bid to augment the Mindanao power supply in the grid.

In an interview with reporters, Energy Secretary Jose Rene Almendras said the proposed generation facility would likely be able to produce around 300 megawatts (MW) of additional capacity.

He said DBU would be a good lead to utilize for a generation facility in power hungry Mindanao as it is relatively cheap, fast to build, and enable stability. Also, DBU will be a good fit for Mindanao's predominantly green sources of power, mainly hydro with some solar.

"Mindanao also needs non-hy-

What's next for the Philippine Stock Exchange?

POINT OF LAW

Francis Lim

ON DEC. 28, 2010, the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) wrote the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) informing the latter that, effective Jan. 1, 2011, listed companies must comply with the minimum public ownership (MPO) requirement of the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

The MPO requirement is set between 20 percent and 33 percent, depending on the market capitalization of the companies.

Under the BIR issuance, and upon DOF (Secretary) Cesar Purisima's instruction, the failure of a listed company to comply with the requirement will expose the shareholders to capital gains tax of 5 percent on the first P100,000 capital gains, and 10 percent on any amount in excess thereof—instead of the preferential stock transaction tax (STT) rate of ½ of 1 percent—when they sell or dispose of their shares through the PSE.

The MPO used to be both an initial public offering (IPO) requirement and a continuing listing requirement of the PSE. An IPO shareholder is not happy with the MPO requirement as it is a condition precedent before the company can be listed on the PSE. As a continuing listing requirement, the listed company must continue complying with the MPO, otherwise it may be suspended from trading and eventually delisted from the PSE, ahead of listed companies.

The MPO was suspended by the PSE as a continuing listing requirement in 2000, initially for a period of two years. It was further suspended in 2003 for another three years because of great market conditions. The PSE board finally rejected the rule as a continuing listing requirement in 2005 on the philosophy that it was better to leave the public float of listed companies to market forces rather than legislate" on it.

The removal of the MPO rule as a continuing listing requirement means that there would be fewer shares available for purchase from the stock market.

During my term at the PSE, I personally pushed for its removal, convinced as I was that the viability of our stock market, initially, there was some resistance, but fortunately, before I left the PSE in 2004, the PSE board reinstated the rule, this time fixing the MPO level at a minimum level of 10 percent regardless of the company's market capitalization, giving our listed companies a grace period to comply before getting delisted by the PSE.

The BIR, subsequently approved the rule, and listed companies had been given by the PSE and SEC Nov. 30, 2011 to comply with the requirement.

Meanwhile, the BIR has required, under its letter dated Dec. 28, 2010, listed companies to comply with the original MPO requirement effective Jan. 1.

The BIR has taken issue with the BIR issuance. It pointed out that the National Internal Revenue Code (Tax Code) requires that the STT on listed stocks to be capped by the investors as shares of stock are "listed and traded through the local stock exchange" without any MPO requirement.

Some sectors defend the BIR position. They argue that the interpretation is justified by the purpose of the law to have genuine public trading of listed shares, which is difficult to achieve with many of our listed companies having minimal public float. They also see the new requirement as a big step towards solving our stock market's liquidity problem, which is an oft-repeated complaint that drives investors away from our stock market. Of course, others disagree.

Let us settle the new issuance is in consequence of the disagreements between the leadership of the DOF/BIR and some personalities in the PSE.

Whatever the reasons are, the DOF/BIR and the PSE are obviously worlds apart on the matter. What is encouraging is that Secretary Purisima, during the launch of the PSE's new trading system, announced that the DOF, BIR, PSE, Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) and Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas (BSP) will sit down with the PSE to thresh out issues between the DOF/BIR and the PSE. Supposedly, there was a meeting between Henares and new DOF President Cesar Purisima last Jan. 27, but there is still no official banquet from the BIR resolving the issue.

An amicable resolution of the matter at the earliest possible time is of paramount importance to the stock market. Stakeholders remain in the stock market despite it. With the new BIR issuance in place, investors stand the risk of being assessed by the BIR for capital gains tax for selling their listed stocks through the PSE. Investors will not buy stock market investments, indeed!

Worse, if the BIR insists on its interpretation, the exemption from documentary stamp tax (DST) for stock market transactions is also in jeopardy. Without any imposition of transferring one of the modest accomplishments as PSE president was to get a permanent DST exemption from Congress for our stock market. It is significant to note, however, that the legal provisions on the STT and DST are identically worded. the tax incentives are available for shares of stock that are "listed and traded through the local stock exchange." Obviously, if the BIR insists from its ex-STT interpretation, the next logical thing for it to do is to require compliance with the MPO requirement as a condition for the enjoyment of the DST exemption.

What this means for stock market investors is that, if the listed company does not comply with the PSE's MPO requirement, they will not only be deprived of the preferential STT rate and stand the risk of being assessed for the higher capital gains tax rate. Worse, they will also lose their DST exemption.

The question is: Is this the next thing that the PSE should expect from the DOF and BIR?

Stock market aficionados, keep your fingers crossed!

(The author, formerly the President and CEO of the Philippine Stock Exchange, is now a Senior Partner of the Angara Abello Concepcion Regala & Cruz Law Offices or ACCRALAW. He can be contacted through lim@accralaw.com.ph.)

EARLY TURN-OVER FOR CITYLAND GRAND EMERALD TOWER

Cityland, with an undisputed track record in the completion and delivery of MRO projects for more than 20 years, proudly announces the early turn-over of its project, the ORANGE EMERALD TOWER. With the 4-storey-wide ramp, Cityland's Grand Emerald Tower, buyers can view minor finishing touches and turn-over of units ahead of schedule. The early turn-over would also make room for immediate occupancy and fit-out by tenants.

Grand Emerald Tower is a 28-storey commercial, office and residential condominium located at Ortigas Jr. (formerly Emerald) corner Pasig and Garnet Sts., Ortigas Center, Pasig City. It is in proximity to various landmarks such as ACE, Fisherman's Galleria, Pinatan, Shangri-La Plaza, EDSA Annex, Greenfield's Christian Fellowship, Manalac Center, Cityland Pasig and other business establishments.

Residents of Grand Emerald Tower will enjoy living in the building with its well-equipped with features and amenities such as 24-hour security, security, intercom, gym, swimming pool, separate tenant for men and women, multi-purpose function room, and Children's Playground.

Cityland, with an undisputed track record in the completion and delivery of MRO projects for more than 20 years, proudly announces the early turn-over of its project, the ORANGE EMERALD TOWER. With the 4-storey-wide ramp, Cityland's Grand Emerald Tower, buyers can view minor finishing touches and turn-over of units ahead of schedule. The early turn-over would also make room for immediate occupancy and fit-out by tenants.

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Cityland continues on its fervent commitment to provide properties with excellent location that is friendly on the budget. A sure good way to make a good return on investment in Cityland are economic studios.

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Canadian miner eyes new site in Surigao

By Riza T. Olchondra

MINDORO RESOURCES Ltd. has received the right to acquire a 220-hectare area in the Carmen municipality of Surigao's Tagana project in nickel-rich Surigao del Norte province.

In a statement, company president and CEO Jon Dagdale said that Mindoro Resources' subsidiary MRL Gold Phils. Inc. signed an agreement with Mt. Diwata Mining Industrial Corp. (MF Mining) last Feb. 16 for the possible acquisition.

Under the deal, MRL Gold may secure an exploration permit (EP) that covers the 220-hectare area.

Dagdale said the prospective site was located beside a mining project Mindoro Resources recently acquired from Corplex Resources Inc. The site is immediately west of the Tagana-Hilamatik area where there are "promising nickel values."

Once the Philippine Mines and Geosciences Bureau has certified that the exploration permit is "valid and in good standing," MF Mining will receive a cash payment of P1.5 million. And when the assessment has been granted, MF Mining will receive an additional payment of P2 million.

Later, Mindoro Resources will have three months to conduct due diligence. At the same time, the company plans to commence on aggressive drilling program to determine the value of the resources at the site.

Upon completing its due diligence, Mindoro Resources will have the option to fully acquire MF Mining's project in exchange for P28 million.

Mindoro Resources also announced that drill results at the Bulalacao and Kantibong sites in Oriental Mindoro's strong potential minerals.

A total of 3666 holes had been completed to date from the drilling program designed to systematically test and determine resources at the initial 6 targets.

"The regional drilling program (in Surigao) continues to produce strong results in terms of thickness and grade, as we progressively test our regional targets to grow the nickel resource base," Dagdale said.

Infill drilling will continue at Bulalacao alongside a program to test the East Zone site upon completion of a grade control drilling program at Agata, Dagdale added.

LIFESTYLE Food
Editor Thelma Sioson San Juan

Crispy 'laing samosa'

The perennial leftover becomes a choice starter, light and nutritious

By Nanglo Bago-Reyes

HAVE you ever heard of makeover food? Sometimes it only takes a change in presentation for dull-looking food to become a novel taste treat.

Laing, for example, looks out and lonely right beside the vibrant *kare-kare*. Judith Ta. chuycay or pinoybot. Foodie Ma-an de Ocampo realized this could relieve the poor, pitied an all-time buffet and nobody ate the lowly laing "gabi or taro leaves cooked in coconut milk.

"I asked myself, 'what would I do with the leftover laing?' And then I challenged myself on how to make people eat the green vegetable," says De Ocampo.

Instead of serving this veggie as part of the main course, De Ocampo has reinvented laing into an appetizer or finger food in the form of Crispy Laing Samosa.

The cooked laing is recently wrapped in a lumpia wrappers, deep fried and then served with vinegar (optional) to complement the crunchy bite and balance the salty flavor of laing. You can also use a wonton wrapper to make laing into a roll.

"It's a healthy starter, light and nutritious," says De Ocampo, who also runs Quatro Gr-8 (Thirty dreams, Quezon City; tel. 8281682, 09173943493). "You can also make it a vegetarian snack by simply removing the pork."

When frying, make sure the oil is hot enough to make the samosa really crispy. Deep fry three or four pieces at a time, making sure to leave enough space between them. Fry until golden brown. Drain on paper towels.

Step By Step

Ingredients

50 g pork strips
50 g shrimp, shelled
10 g ginger, julienned
10 g onion, chopped
10 g garlic, minced
500g laing, chopped
1 tsp *bagoong alamang*
½ c fresh coconut milk
2 c boiled gabi leaves, cut
½ c water
Lumpia wrappers
Oil for deep-frying

For suggestions, e-mail the author at nbago@inquirer.com.ph.

1 Fry pork and set aside. In a pan, sauté garlic in oil till golden brown. Add onion, ginger, fried pork and shrimp.

GROOM'S family: Jesse and Perla Perado, Micah and mom Pebbs Sollres, the newlyweds, Ruby Sollres, Lisa and Richard Lastreto

LANI Aquino, Alba Ejercito, Chiara Diaz with husband Carlito Morales and daughter Gabri, Pamille Morales, the newlyweds, Carlos Morales, Mara Garcia, Brianna Morales and Sedan Morales

JON CURTIS, Cyrus Lendrit, Louie Reyes, Jason Hagat, Hazel Paloyan and James Cruz

Manila's hot bachelors and bachelorettes—and a romantic sunset wedding for my precious niece

NICOLA Santiago and Baby Santiago Hazell

HAZEL of Inner Angle and Ben Calaquio

JEYBOY de Borja and Sam Cruz

CHOT and Cherry Reyes

NEXT to up their "I do's"—Dionne Morales and Mara Garcia

ELAINE Alexandra and Angela Angeles

MOI and Bernie Gachica

SINCE IT'S still love month, darlings, and as a follow-up to my column last Friday, I'll continue with stories of more love happenings in cosmo-Manille, as well as wishes for some of my good friends.

I hope naughty Cupid hits those gorgeous gals with a perfect bull's-eye in the heart, soon: Samantha Idioque, Stefan Dragon, Liana Bonnin, Sigrid Silkuel, Rosanna Pecson, Christina Brandes, Vicky de Leon, Abba Napa, Karen Santos, Frances Lim, Margo Valdez, Margarita Araneta Perez, Bea Lucsan, Malou Gutchon, Irene Lee, Maryanne Cavaccan, Katrina Hedgepeth, Gina Lopez, Marguerite Gauthier, Catherine Hoang, Ondine Santos, Leah Puyat, Sara Manotupal, Jessica Kaede, Becca Bosch, Frances Espinosa, Ramon Valerio, Leah de Guzman, Chito-nee Co, Mario Mainer, Amanda de Guzman, Bea Tantoco, Mia Buencamino, Annaliese de Leon, Melody Puyat, Cheryl Ilo, Christina Zaare, Jessica Payot, Selmo Honorioff, CJ Antonio, Michelle and Tina Pamintuan.

I hope they will soon also find their Mr. Right, who will sweep them off their feet and finally say "I do" to them.

As for all are confirmed or not-so-confirmed bachelors who are also waiting for Mr. Right, here are some of them:

Precious Neptune Aquino, leading the pack, of course, Kevin Tan, Glenn Soen, Raymond Encarnacion Yap, Antonio Buencamino, Chino Melin, Erick Cua, Edgar Ilio, Rep. Jerry Zarate, Jun Reyes, Norwin Unchuan, Mike Tantoco, Jonathan Crespi, Bonito Singson, Rep. Nonoy Chipeco, Chat Guevara, Ivi Singlo and Robbie Dunlay.

Vintage with modern touches

From eligibles to newlyweds! Recently one brilliant and attractive niece, Natasha Grace Morales, had her altar date with her soulmate, handsome Marco Sollores.

Natasha is the daughter of

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Historico Javacolor

Photos by Alex Van Hagen
presented by PANDA MUSIC CENTER

businessman Carlos Morales and Pearly Arzobe M., while Marco is son of businessman Raoul "Bobby" Sollres and Ms. Helena "Heidy" Parado Jr. The couple had been dating for two years before Marco proposed to Natasha.

Their elegant Christian wedding was held at One Ayala plaza, and timed exactly as that they said their I do's with the awesome Manila Bay sunset as background.

"I was looking for a vintage wedding yet with modern touches," my niece told me. "I also wanted the ceremony to be very light, fun and, of course, romantic. The flowers, the food, the music and the mood of my entire wedding was just perfect! I got everything I wished for."

The bride's childhood pals, which included professional wedding coordinators Nancy Alfonso of Silver Anyone and Mimi Perlas, were in charge of pulling off the entire romantic event.

The bride and her entire entourage were gowned by Rajo Laurel. Natasha's wedding gown was a fabulous creation—truly a Rajo!

Flowers Unlimited adorned the church reception hall with beautiful blooms in the reception. Cinnamon Catering provided the superb buffet spread, which everyone was raving about, darlings.

Natasha's friend, me, stood as one of the couple's principal sponsors, among 16 other ramp-strappables. The bourbon sixteen who thrilled over the vision of the young lovers included Sen. Bongbong Marcos and his wife Borbona Lopez G.; Bulakeno's popular Vice Governor Joe Zubiri and wife Nicky Fernandez Z.; Gary and Angeli Valenciano; Bikol Rodrigo Bonifacio; Malacañang Social Secretary Susan Reyes; Baby Kiel Fricke; Vincent Rigoro Reyes and David Eduardo Lim; Baby Santiago Hazell (a close pal of my niece Pearlie, who joined us from Ecuador for this wedding); Israel-turned Lani Aquino; and Peachy Zelaeta Romeo, among others.

It was an awesome wedding that had the mature invitees sighing, "Ah, to be young again and in love!" Amen, palangges.

Romantic musical comedy

Upstart Productions is staging an original romantic musical comedy "Brooklyn & Beatdown," at Teatrino, Greenhills, on Feb. 17-18, 23-26, and March 4-5, 11-12 at 8 p.m. with 3 p.m. matinees on Feb. 19 and 26, and March 5 and 12 (e-mail upstartticket@gmail.com or visit upstartproductions.com).

The talented cast includes stage veteran Joel Trinidad, who also wrote the show with Song Bong Dumpit and musical director Rene Pardo, to test "Miss Saigon" US/Canada Tour alumna Emerlito Abdul, actor/singer Boulevard Ty, and romantic newcomer Jill Reiss, alternating with Carla Guevara-Laforteza.

Joel, founder and artistic director of Upstart Productions, promises, "This production will be funny, touching and romantic!"

The perfect date show for this Valentine season, di baba?

NEWLYWEDS Natasha Arzobe Sollres (née Morales) and Marco Sollres

JUNIOR Perlas-Jurado and groomsmen Tisha Sollres, Gabbie Gaviola, Maxine Sollres, the couple, Justin Parado, Stefan Morales and Elbo Fuentes

EDDIE Pudres, Jolo Manalo, Carlo and Carla Carballo, the couple, Cathy Sison, Val Gutierrez, John and Mimi Peña

NEWLYWEDS and principal sponsors Marlena Castillo, LT Rafael, Baby Santiago Hazell, Elvira Lazaro, Lani Aquino, Divac Sevilla, Bernie Lachica, Val Sollres, Serge Dumelod, Chat Reyes, Vice Gov. Joe Zubiri, Nicky Fernandez, David Lim, Dino Laurenos, Ramoral Gaviano and Arthur Pelino

WEDDING coordinator Susy Alfonso

FRIEND of the bride, Jolo Manalo

CF and Bernice Flores Sevegam

PADGE Hayong, Bar Aguado, Jamie de la Cruz and Michelle Hurtado

PRINCIPAL sponsor Marissa Roque and husband Andrew Roque with the newlyweds

CARLOS Morales, Vicky Zulet, Goose Reyes and Jude Soriano

CARLA Guevara-Laforteza, Andrea Ilo, Joel Trinidad and Ernesto Abcede

FLOWER girl and ring, coin and bible bearers. Front row: Amanda Prats, Raya Sollres, Enrique Prats. Back: Jolo Gaviola, Aiska Gaviola, Eiden Morales, Harry Sollres and Joaquin Deanpo

SHIDDY Chan, the newlyweds and Pastor Paul Chua

Marinated Salmon Gravlax, Bangus Belly Roulade, Steak Tartare–Chef Billy King is back!

THE KING is back! And I would like to be the first to welcome my dear friend home, to Makati, that is.

After many years, Chef Billy King is again in Makati at Via Alpha, on the 5th floor of Alpha Land Bldg. (Edsa corner Dasmariñas Village). His new restaurant is quite a wonder, easy and quaint, as if you had the place all to yourself.

Even more wonderful is that you will actually see Chef King, hands-on, much like in the early days. I caught up with him and asked why he still does this given the many food establishments he has under his wing.

It question I often ask [myself]," he said. "It's fun—when everything goes well, it's fun! I don't feel any difference doing it 20 to 25 years ago. It is not easier though, believe me! When I saw this place, I said it would be nice to make good food here."

How different is Alpha from his other establishments?

"Well, when we agreed on one that I would give good value for money. Aside from a la carte, we also menus of the day and one express dishes," he said.

For lunch, his menu for the day is at P850, inclusive of everything—Marinated Salmon Gravlax, Dill Mustard Dressing or Seafood Chowder (you could even ask for half a portion and half a soup as the portions are large; but please don't order to-share one Mains for the Day and share it); Pork Tenderloin, Pear Wine Sauce, Potato Wedges and Vegetable Confit or Bangus Belly Roulade Stuffed with Pacific Rice, Thyme Garlic Sauce, Salad Melange; Strawberry Plumbe or Chocolate Lasone; Coffee or Tea.

I opted for the bangus, and it was excellent. So were the gravlax and the chowder.

And, of course, how could I resist a good steak tartare? The bread served was crusty, light and crisp—done perfection, especially with steak tartare.

On other days, you may find Duck Adobo and Goat Cheese Filo Salad with Assorted Greens, Apple, Celery, Walnut Vegan Salsa; or a side large portion of baked salmon—the nice pinkish type, and not that already frozen to the core.

The offerings are eclectic, fun, innovative and, as promised, very reasonable, considering the taste, the quality of ingredients used, the ambiance and the impeccable service.

"Here, we are flexible; we can make things that you like that are not even on the menu," said Chef King.

All-time favorites

He is referring to his many dishes that have become staples. It's safe to say many of Chef King's creations have become our all-time favorites. Couldn't feed, in short.

"We also keep track of what people like from the menu of the day. The favorites stay on our menu," he added.

There's a lot of kitchen play going on at Alpha.

"I do a fantastic home-aged lime sirloin steak with horseradish on top," said Chef King. For 2011—"Well, you know me, for me food is all about surprising, first tastes good. I am probably going away from doing comfort-foods. I am trying to get back to the simplicity of things—clean, good tasting cuisine without the heaviness, putting layered light touches."

I asked him if there's anything else he wants out of life.

"Hmmmm. That's a good question, but I've never thought about it. I am learning to live and take things as they come. The question is what else do I want to do out of life. It is perhaps finding a better way to pass on my knowledge."

You've had a good run, Mr. King, a very good run, I said.

"I am in a very good country. I have had a beautiful canvas to work with. I could see there's many appreciators for the things I do. When people appreciate the things I do, that's good enough for me."

The pictures I took of Chef King's dishes are as they are served and not pieced for photo ops only. I was floored when I saw the portions!

On weekends there is live music, so it also becomes a nice place to hang out and have a round of drinks with friends.

Call Via Alpha at 5093851, 5093854 for reservations.

KITCHEN RESCUE

Reggie Aspiras

Premium burgers

From Makati, let's go to Quezon City where along Xavierville Avenue is a little establishment called Boulevard Diner.

I strongly recommend you try its burgers for the following reasons: It is where you are about 2 cups of burger chippings on your plate once you've consumed the burger. You can keep slurping and no one will know you've just had a "burger"—you've eaten it all! The patties are perfectly flavorful.

You know the diner feeling also and fight—no cloying affectionate or pangs of homesick.

According to Wine Cong, Center for Culinary

CHEF Billy King's bangus roulade stuffed with pacific

Ate Manila graduate and co-owner-chef of Boulevard Diner. "We use 100 percent premium-cut US-B beef that is grown specially for us."

I had the Gorgonzola Burger, and I promised

GORGONZOLA Burger

to try the other burger combinations and the chicken wings, too.

(Tel. 5065634 or 0906-4583030)

For my cooking class schedules, call (632) 5543782, 8908, 2372246, 8008696, 9285259; E-mail: reginaa@inquirer.com.ph

His new resto's offerings are eclectic, fun, innovative and, as promised, very reasonable

Crispy 'laing samosa'

CRISPY Laing Samosa

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Q: Will these treatments take long hours?
A: Absolutely not. You can come in during your lunch break and finish your sessions within the hour. Both treatments don't require downtime. It will only take a few minutes from your busy schedule to improve your skin for the long haul.

Q: What results can I expect from these treatments?
A: The acne on your face and back will be eliminated. You will have fewer breakouts and continued treatments will prevent future acne breakouts, for good. Skin will be clearer, brighter and smoother. Expect visible results in just a few sessions.

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LIFESTYLE Food

How to be an ethical eater

Learn what 'organic' means, eat what's in season, share heirloom recipes

CALAMATA and kamsong —local fruits produced in the market

By Glenae Pelarca
Lifestyle Editor

THERE'S the organic food movement, the slow food movement, the local food movement, and many more. There's also unsustainable agriculture, fair trade, biodiversity.

I feel my eyes glazing already, how about you? Is there make sense other than an imported First World fads in a country where most don't have enough to eat?

The answer is, they don't. Not without being unpacked, debated, understood and re-implemented by people much more clever than me.

But there is such a thing as eating local shopping, and doing it responsibly, and not just well. Being a foodie is not just about feasts and fine wines, but also thinking seriously about food, as well as the effects and origins of food, be it a feast or a ordinary gusto.

I like to think of myself as an ethical eater. I'm sure the phrase means many things to many people, but this is what it means to me.

1. Don't just buy organic. Or, to be fair, don't buy organic just because it says so, or because you think you'll be a better person for doing it.

The debate on organic food is so complex, and its definition so loose, that each organic product has to be evaluated on its own terms. In many cases, organic food is for the better, and also tastes better. But in many cases it isn't, is not sustainable, or in the worst case scenario, is a ripoff.

Find out as much as you can about what you're paying for before shelling out the extra cash.

2. Share recipes. How many times have we heard about someone's old relative going to the next life and taking that unforgettable dinuguan/adobo/pancit recipe with him or her?

Food historians like to say we don't notice them our recipes because we're in oral cultures. I think we don't write them down because we fear others will steal them. It is possible that someone will show up with your unique recipe at the next potluck, but the stunt of a great cook is the ability to cook—as well.

3. Eat with the seasons. Yes, really we have seasons, not just rainy season and summer. There are a few months (around April) when the frigid, perfumed Guimaras mangoes are at their best; when the lanzones are so sweet there's a festival (third week of October) to celebrate; when the warm waters around Dinagat in April produce the tiniest, juiciest oysters.

There are only a few months in the year, starting around January, when you can get fresh garlic stalks, essential for cooking Ilonggo *Binlog*, laboring for Iraks and vegetables in some town season means they'll be cheaper and better, and one can appreciate them more.

4. Look for and ask for local fruits. I'm quite impressed with the selection in my local supermarket, but some fruits from my childhood are less and less frequently spotted: santol, macopa, chico, balimbing, avocado, duhat.

I have no decided that these fruits are too common or uninteresting for the well-oiled, well-lit shelves of the urban supermarket? I'm partial to santol, and can eat several, sold from the *bilao*, in one go. When I was a boy, they used to float down and splat on the roof in somewhat offend abundance.

Just looking for them, noting their absence, is the first step. Getting them back to the supermarket and touching our kids the fun of eating them is the next step.

5. Use coconut oil for general cooking. In the mid-'80s, US oil producers launched a smear campaign (haha!) against "tropical grease," targeting coconut oil as we know it. Although many scientific studies have since been published to the contrary people still half believe it, and prefer the more expensive canola oil or imported vegetable oil (usually rapeseed/canola) to essential oil, which has a natural flavor and very high smoke point.

6. Don't load up the freezer. The practice of dressing to the membership club in a

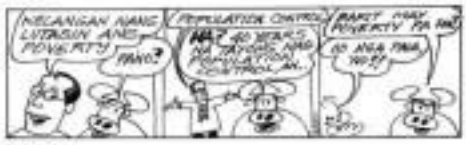
LOOK TO D2

COMICRelief

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 17, 2011

GARFIELD — BY JIM DAVIS

A. LIPIN



PUGAD BABOY — BY PAUL LANDER

DICK TRACY

LOVEBOTS — BY ELIZABETH HONORIGO

BABY BLUES — BY JERRY SCOTT

RED MACHINE — BY MARK ABREU

BEN — BY DANIELLE BELTON

ZYRA — BY EDALLO & EDUARDO

CHEMANY'S LAGOON — BY JIM TOOMEY

TULDOK — BY MARA COLL

Laging makinig ng iPhone sa 3G? LAM 1 8:00 AM -1 00 PM Lunes hanggang Biyernes

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS CRAIG

THIS WEEK TODAY You're very brave. You have any obstacles with courage. Friendship, personal relationships and romance. Remember, you're realistic about outlook, you can't have romance, and friend of your loved ones. You be there in yourself, in the new check, a major change might occur, perhaps something or someone in your life.

Birthdays of: Kofi Annan, author Jerry Stranahan, actor Pablo Milanés, socialite.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19) You might find several exciting opportunities today with you dealing with friends, relatives or business associates. This is a good time to make decisions and confidence today.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20) This is a very good day to ask for favors or for permission or approval from loved ones, parents, teachers or bosses. You could come with obstacles or rejection. Don't ever hesitate to take time.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20) Activities with loved ones or anything having to do with higher education, publishing or the law, as well as planning good friendship, are favored today. Take care not to overindulge in food or drink.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22) You might find others to be generous to you today. However, if someone is manipulative to your cause, he or she could be quite hurtful.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22) It's easy to be confused about partnerships and close friendships today. Your intuition is not working well, so don't rely on it for any kind of things. Someone who has been out of favor is trying to win you back.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22) You feel so expansive toward others today, particularly if they you want to help socialize. Remember, there are obstacles to be met. Don't be confused about something you want to get.

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22) You are really attracted to romantic partnerships or activities with children, or events you take however difficulties with children or romance are favored today. Be careful not to overindulge.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21) You have the full focus today. Travelers today favored with authority figures or events. Ideally, to build up. You could prove to be disappointing to you.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21) Your intuition is unusual today. However, others might think you're out to achieve. Make decisions to avoid confrontations. Check and open them.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19) Be extra careful about financial matters and your own spirit now today. You might be confused about something. When in doubt, do not act. Don't rush and listen.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18) Someone isn't all there with you. This is why you feel a challenge in tension with partners and other friends today. Is there enough acknowledgment today?

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20) Confident with co-workers today, because someone can feel the subtlest of desires before anyone else's confidence. Love and be the today.

CONCEPTS SU DOKU

HOW TO PLAY SU DOKU

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Tips and strategies at www.sudoku.com

Answer to previous puzzle

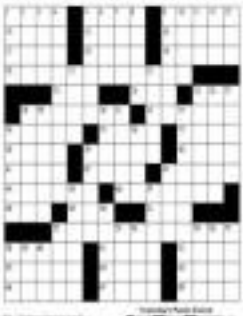
7	1	5	3	6	4	8	9	2
3	6	9	7	8	2	5	1	4
8	4	2	5	9	1	7	6	3
4	5	8	6	1	9	2	3	7
6	9	1	2	3	7	4	8	5
2	7	3	8	4	5	9	2	1
5	2	6	9	7	3	1	4	8
1	8	7	4	2	6	3	5	9
9	3	4	1	5	8	6	7	2

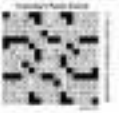
Concepts Sudoku By Dave Green

		6				1	5	
			8					
5		1						4
8	6		9			4		
1				2				3
	4				1		9	8
2						6		7
					6			
	3	5				9		

Difficulty level ★★★

CROSSWORD PUZZLE





Book revisits Edsa, Noynoy victory

"HISTORY: The Triumph of a People's Campaign," by Wilfredo Villacorta, the Philippine ambassador to Belgium, chronicles the spontaneous movement that swept Benigno Aquino III to the forefront of the tallest wave of People Power. It is a collective memoir of those involved in the movement for reform: members of the academe, fellow Ateneo graduates, community organizers and former street parliamentarians. The book will be launched formally on Feb. 21, in time for the Edsa anniversary celebrations in Powerbooks in Greenbelt 4, Makati City.

Villacorta wrote the book in a record time of seven months. His goal: "to reinforce the Filipinos' trust in our own ability to help rebuild a nation and recommit ourselves to achieving excellence and development."

The author is a member of the Liberal Party and a former Chair of its think tank, the National Institute for Policy Studies.

Asian cooking seminar

The Golden Treasure Skills and Development Program will conduct a one-day seminar on how to make a variety of Asian dishes—Chinese, Japanese, Thai, Singaporean, Malaysian and Filipino.

The seminar is set on Feb. 27, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., at the College of Social Work and Community Development (CSWCD), Magsaysay Ave., cor. Tiaman St., University of the Philippines, Diliman, Quezon City.

For inquiries, call 436-7835, 431-1177, 6436551 and 4357881 or log on to www.tourismassets.com

How to be an ethical eater

From page B1

small snack and loading up the deep-fryer is an American suburban nightmare that doesn't make sense in a country where we have access to local markets and supermarkets.

Fruit, vegetables and fish were sunday pork buns in moderation, poultry much of its Raven Grey beef and lamb, which have to be frozen to get here from Australia or the US anyway, is worth keeping in the freezer.

7. Free-range eggs are better. Unfortunately, they're also more than twice the price, starting at about P200 for a dozen, going on to over P300 for "organic" legends, an explanation as to what made those eggs so posh?

With this kind of price difference, only rich people will be able to eat free-range eggs, while the rest of us will have to be content with bland battery-hen eggs. But the greater the demand for free-range, the more producers there will be, and the price should, in theory, go down.

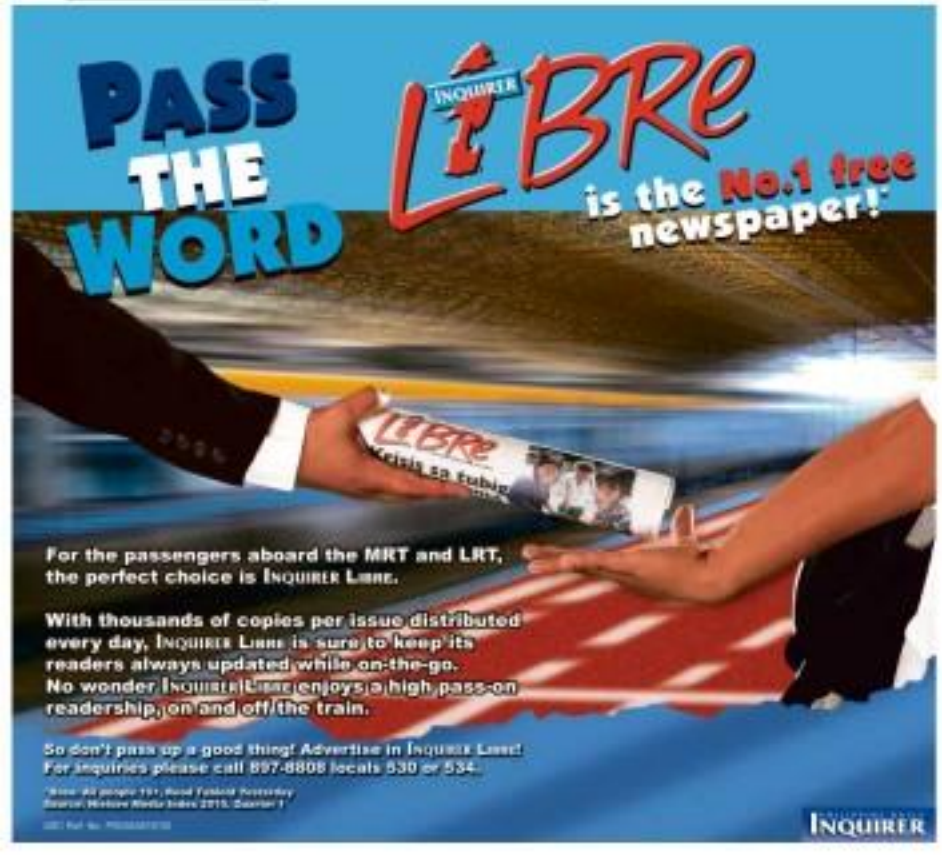
8. "No MSG" doesn't mean it's healthy. First of all, the jury is still out on the MSG debate. Suspected food critic Jeffrey Steingarten has led the defense of MSG, and, more recently, celebrity chef Heston Blumenthal has espoused the use of iconic derived umami flavorings.

Monosodium glutamate is just one of the many ways in which glutamates can be synthesized. Chicken powder, yeast extract and Kelon maltdextrin are other ways to mask glutamate in tender another name.

Like many things, it's bad in excessive amounts, a judicious amount shouldn't upset you. There are many more sinister things, like excessive sodium, that lurk behind the "No MSG" claim.

If this list seems particularly random, that's because these are rules I try to abide by based on my eating habits, my priorities and my own constraints on the food I eat.

But these are less important than getting into the habit of thinking about your food and not just seeing it in terms of perceived value or bragging rights. Just as, as one gets older, every time requires a bit of flexibility, every gastronomic needs to take a bit of responsibility.



My latest find—Japanese eat-all-you-can resto

WORD OF MOUTH

Sandy Daroy

AMONG 101 true kids, so far it is my daughter Ali who seems to have picked up my love for adventure in eating.

Her eyes sparkle whenever you say green mango. When we were based in Vancouver, every time I flew to Manila she would have me fly her some herbs, mainly lemongrass.

Like me, she loves salted fish (bisugo and Japanese food. And like me, she will binge on sauce. (Ming and work out to burn all the pisam-is and gaba.

A backstreet buddy and foodie, Ricky Alferez, has always told me about his culinary adventures and discoveries in the provinces and his finds in the metropolis. One of the recent ones is an eat-all-you-can Japanese restaurant in Tomas Morato, Quezon City.

Actually, I am no longer a fan of eat-all-you-can buffets. I avoid them, especially in the evening, because I don't like going to bed with a full tummy.

The Japanese food Ali is used to is home-cooked but exceptional ingredients. Her standard for exceptional ingredients is quite high. In Vancouver, a simple fresh Colombian tuna is the equivalent already of our tuna sashimi here.

So to take her to this Tomas Morato place I had never been to was a risk, a possible taint on my connoisseur reputation.

Expensive selection

The name of the restaurant was Yakimi. As we went in, as soon as the elevator doors opened, we were greeted with welcome shouts by the service staff. I saw the sparkle in Ali's eyes. (She tend to keep her compliments, but kept whispering how excited she was.

I have been to many Japanese buffets, but I have not seen this kind of selection. Most buffets don't have the expensive items available, like sashimi, prawn tempura and others. This one did.

I assured all I wish Japanese and Korean salads, then moved on to sashimi, sushi, tempura, bulgogi, seafood rolls, hot pot, grilled steaks, boneless chicken, fried rice, the crispy squid with a nice dipping sauce, and many others.

To say I am fully satisfying, forget it: my everything, I forgot what Ali was doing. But she was in heaven.

This was such a discovery. We all loved the food, so that evening, Ali already wanted to go back. She described the ice cream selection as "like going to the grocery and being able to try anything in the freezer." Drinks were also unlimited.

With our adventure a success, I quietly took the credit for the next choice—a feather in my foodie cap, in the eyes of my foodie daughter.

We all look forward to going back. I hear the menu runs for a while spread in the evening. It's less than P500 per head. What a steal!

Some tips, though: Exercise or work out before the meal. Don't have breakfast if you're going there for lunch, or have a light lunch if you're going there for dinner. Eat slowly. And don't shop right after (Tsangpangan?).

The best time to plan a diet is right after the meal. Whether or not you'll keep a schedule, you get hungry again—well, that's another story.

Happy eating!

Inkwente is at 270 Tomas Morato, Quezon City. Call (02) 4164503 or 0917-8009988.

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Jollibee honors Jolly Toy Scouts for record toys and books collected in 16th Maaga ang Pasko

The 16th Jollibee Maaga ang Pasko brought the spirit of giving and sharing to children in need in the biggest and brightest ways yet. With the all-out support of patron schools, companies and other organizations, the campaign's largest campaign site and book collection drive resulted earlier this month in 1,000 students of record books and 7,000 — enabling for a well-deserved thanksgiving event for all the kids' Toy Scouts.

Held in the University of Makati's Greatest Hotel, the annual thanksgiving was an opportunity for Jollibee to recognize the many partner schools and companies who lent their commitment to the success of the past Maaga campaign. From among the Jolly Toy Scout partners, Colegio de San Agustin and Land Bank of the Philippines were recognized as the top contributors for collecting the most number of toys and books in their respective school and offices.

Last year's Maaga ang Pasko reached out to more children to spread with over 200,000 toys and books collected. Making even more kids happy, Jollibee matched each gift with a Jollibee toy, effectively doubling the number of donations. In its 16 years, the campaign has already touched no fewer than 2 million gifts to children in need across the

The 16th Jollibee Maaga ang Pasko has truly achieved greater strengths thanks to the efforts of our Jolly Toy Scouts and our partner schools and companies. This is a testament to the growing generosity that Filipinos share and spread that the campaign is growing even bigger and will continue to grow for years to come," said Glenn Cambronero, Jollibee vice president for marketing.

The campaign also received support from a huge network of partners with 31 partner companies and 50 partner schools coming all out for the cause.

The highlight of Pasko Toy Scouts' reward day is the presentation of Christmas cheer. Even Jollibee Tandemonium Team regulars Jamil Concepcion, Bianca Fernandez, Shiela Mercadero, Stefanie Mercado, Hanson Lorenzo and Emmanuel Pinto shared their talent and participated in the clean-up drive last November for the toys and books collected.

Throughout the years, Jollibee Maaga ang Pasko has grown to become a national movement that has spread cheer and happiness to Pinoy kids. And with the help of corporate partners and the volunteer Jolly Toy Scouts, Jollibee Maaga ang Pasko will continue to make a positive and concrete change in the lives of less fortunate children in the years to come.

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Grammy TV audience hits 10-year high

LOS ANGELES—A combination of old stars (including Mick Jagger and Barbra Streisand) and newer faces such as Justin Bieber and Katy Perry lifted the music industry's Grammy Awards on Sunday to their biggest audiences in 10 years. Total viewership was up 5 percent from last year's 25.07 million, CBS said. This year's telecast included big names in pop/music, hip-hop and/rap, country and rock. Reuters

Katrina: Fight ain't over

By Marinel R. Cruz

THE FIGHT ain't over yet, as far as Katrina Halili's lawsuit against Hayden Kho is concerned.

The 25-year-old actress recently filed a motion for appeal before the Pasig City Regional Trial Court, to have her case against Kho reinstated.

In May 2009, Halili sued the cosmetic surgeon for allegedly violating Republic Act No. 9262 or the Anti-Violence Act Against Women and Children of 2004...at the height of the public scandal over a series of videos that showed Kho engaging in sexual acts with her and other women.

Last month, Judge Rodolfo Bonifacio of Branch 159 of the Pasig City Regional Trial Court dismissed the case for "insufficiency of evidence."

Halili admitted she felt hurt when people said she was only capitalizing the issue for personal gain. "In admitting that you have a sex video pretending to be proud of? It's not doing this to promote myself. This is about seeking justice from the person who has wronged me," she told Inquirer Entertainment. "Before I decided to file the case, I had no work and summer until GMA 7, and only recently got my house on sale. I was only lucky that, shortly after this, I got a call from my GMA 7 bosses, who told me to get back to work ..."

Her most recent acting stint was in the romantic drama "Beauty Queen" on Iba Kapuso network.

Grateful

She said she is grateful to the members of the human rights group Gabriela who showed their support by showing up at her court hearings.

"I met victims with similar cases in some of the sessions I've attended with Gabriela. One girl didn't know that her boyfriend had videotaped her. When they broke up a year later, his new girlfriend decided to upload the sex video on the net for everyone to see," Halili recalled.

She wanted to make a stand, she said. Otherwise, "these horrible men will continue doing what they do."

Halili assures that her fight could go on for years. Still, declared, "I'm ready for anything ... Ki' na ako nuon. I'm prepared for the emotional stress ... If I don't do this, lahatin lang lalo ang loob niya (Kho)."

In November 2009, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) revoked Kho's medical license due to the sex video scandal. In a resolution, the PRC's Board of Medicine found the controversial surgeon guilty of committing "immorality, dishonorable and unethical conduct" after he revealed his own private encounter with various women without their consent."

Halili expressed one wish: "Sana maramdaman [niyong] nagpa-'bayag' [salita ko ... 'ha' lang] ko fight. I don't want this to happen to anyone again."

THAT FLEETING MOMENT

"THAT wasn't planned," Piolo Pascual said, moments after approaching sweetheart KC Concepcion at her seat, kneeling and then hugging her while singing "Sum-ang Kiling Pangarap" during his Valentine concert on Monday night at the PICC. When he looked for her again before the show ended, she was gone. "Hmmm-ay," he continued. Did that mean she was proceeding to a secret rendezvous?

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'X'-rated O'Hara film returns

Front page E4

1966—a month before the Edsa revolution.

Apart from political turmoil, the film also had to contend with still competition from Hollywood blockbusters.

To think that O'Hara had initially intended it as her comeback film.

"It was meant to launch Dan Alvarez as an action star. We hoped to make an action film with a relevant social message," O'Hara notes.

"Bagong Hari" tells the story of Adriano Labandar (portrayed by Alvarez), a hired killer who gets caught in the political machinations of a rich governor (Elvira Manahan) and a beautiful mistress (Celine Ad-Castillo).

"There is a lot gun-fighting in hand action films. To be different, we made sure of balancing fighting, an acknowledged Filipino martial art," O'Hara explains.

The director says that he used an "impressionistic approach" in shooting the film. "The cast rose to the challenge of the concept revisions. They were quick and sharp."

He remembers getting nervous though because Manahan used her real jewels in most scenes. "I was worried. Robbers might attack us," he quips.

He eagerly awaits watching the film again—this time, with his relatives who were too young when it was first shown.

"I plan to bring my nieces Janice and Denise O'Hara who are now actresses, too," O'Hara says.

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'X'-rated O'Hara film returns

By Dayani San Diego Jr.

FILMMAKER Mario O'Hara recalls that he has never seen "Bagong Hari" in its entirety on the big screen.

"I was years of it during the dubbing, editing and mixing, but I never had the chance to watch it in the movie house," he relates. "I read or got tired of my films after seeing them countless times during post-production."

After 28 years, O'Hara will finally get to watch his "missing" masterpiece, which was originally released in 1986.

After an MRI screening of filmmaker Ferry's 1974 movie "Isang Gabi, Tatlong Babae," the Institute of Filipino Archives for Film (Sofia) plans to unveil yet another "lost" gem as part of its "Overlooked Films, Underrated Filmmakers" series.

On March 5, Sofia will screen "Bagong Hari" at the Cultural Center of the Philippines' Tanghalang Manuel Conde at 7 p.m.

Teddy Co, Sofia board member, points out that even though it's a relatively recent film, there are no existing copies of "Bagong Hari" so all Sofia found a U-matic tape from a private source.

According to urban legend, producers' quarrels led to the wholesale destruction of the film's negatives and prints. It didn't help that the producers were purportedly disappointed by the film's dismal showing at the box office.

O'Hara recounts that the film was adversely affected by the "X" rating it had earlier received from the Movie and Television Review and Classification Board.

"It was supposed to be shown during the Metro Manila Film Festival, but was yanked out at the last minute because of censorship problems," he says.

With a "Not Adults" rating, it was rescheduled to open in January 1987.

DAMALUHOD in "Bagong Hari"

FILMMAKER Ewoud Ferry and actors Amalia Fuentes, Gremmi Ojeda and Bembi Gomez flex in the Sofia screening of "Isang Gabi, Tatlong Babae" at the CCP

MOVIE TIME

GLORIETTA 4

1: BUCKING
2: MY VALENTINE GIRLS
3: VANISHING ON 7TH STREET
4: THE KITE
5: 127 HOURS
6: JUST GO WITH IT
7: THE MECHANIC

GREENBELT 1

1: 127 HOURS
2: JUST GO WITH IT

GREENBELT 2

1: JUST GOT WITH IT
2: VANISHING ON 7TH STREET
3: THE MECHANIC
4: SANCTUM 3D / JUST GO WITH IT
5: 127 HOURS

ALABANG TOWN CENTER

1: JUST GO WITH IT
2: VANISHING ON 7TH STREET
3: MY VALENTINE GIRLS
4: 127 HOURS
5: THE MECHANIC

AYALA CENTER CEBU

1: JUST GO WITH IT
2: HEREAFTER
3: SANCTUM 3D
4: THE MECHANIC

MARQUEE

1: JUST GO WITH IT
2: THE MECHANIC
3: MY VALENTINE GIRLS
4: HEREAFTER

MARKET! MARKET!

1: JUST GOT WITH IT
2: VANISHING ON 7TH STREET
3: BUCKING
4: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
5: TEMPORARILY CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
6: MY VALENTINE GIRLS
7: RESERVED

TRINOMA

1: BUCKING
2: THE MECHANIC
3: VANISHING ON THE STREET
4: SANCTUM 3D / 2:30, 10:00 AM
5: MY VALENTINE GIRLS
6: 127 HOURS
7: JUST GO WITH IT

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MOVIE SPECIAL

MALL EVENTS

GLORIETTA
Entertainment Hour
February 17 & 18
Activity Center

GREENBELT
Like it: "Like This Manga, Trio Manga & Nanami Manga Nanami"
Share the reason in 1 Mississauga
February 18: Greenbelt 5 Fashion Walk, 5:30pm

ALABANG TOWN CENTER
Like it: "Like This Manga, Trio Manga & Nanami Manga Nanami"
Share the reason in 1 Mississauga
February 18: Circle de las Palmas, 5:00 p.m.

AYALA CENTER CEBU
SM Aquarium Mall Activity: Activity for celebrity contestants
February 19: Activity Center, 4:00 p.m.

MARKET! MARKET!
Like it: "Like This Manga, Trio Manga & Nanami Manga Nanami"
Share the reason in 1 Mississauga
February 18: Activity Center, 4:00 p.m.

TRINOMA
Like it: "Like This Manga, Trio Manga & Nanami Manga Nanami"
Share the reason in 1 Mississauga
February 17: Activity Center, 4:00 p.m.

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